



The Appleknocker

Sebastopol Rotary Club's Weekly Bulletin

Sebastopol Fire Chief – Bill Braga



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"All the News that Fits We Print"

BEFORE THE BELL

Your Humble Scribe zoomed into the July 17, 2020 meeting of the Rotary Club of Sebastopol, (it was the 16th virtual meeting), at approx. 12:00pm. There was a small contingent of Rotarians, among them were our fearless leader **Prez Dan, John and Patti Blount, Bud and Sharon Daveiro, Tom and Pat Dilley, and Aldean Noethig** meeting in the **Dilley's** garage (all wearing masks). Many others were scattered throughout never-never land. There was the usual friendly chatter and discussing of the day's events.

AT THE BELL

Without the Roto Bell, and if you can believe it without the honoring of Old Glory and with no song, your absent minded **Prez** brought the meeting to order at approx. 12:17. Who was it that said there is a first time for everything—this was one of them. **Prez Dan**, in keeping with tradition did remember to have **Jack Blasco** provide us with the thought for the day. "When you reach the end of your rope, tie a knot". Those wise words were spoken by President Franklin D. Roosevelt.

Prez Dan started by thanking the Medical workers and first responders in being so efficient in these troubling times. A find act, indeed.



Sonoma County YWCA Domestic Violence Hotline 707-546-1234

Future Programs

July 24

**Dee Schweitzer
Sonoma County Grand Jury**

July 31

**Keller McDonald
Sonoma County Swifts
Now you see them, now you don't**

August 7

**CA Secretary of State
Alex Padilla
Election Integrity in California**

Miscellany

MAKEUP NOTIFICATIONS—scottbriggs50@yahoo.com

On-line Make-Ups:

www.RotaryEClubOne.org

Domestic Violence Hotline:

707-546-1234

sebastopolrotary.com

VISITING ROTARIANS & GUESTS

The Bud Man introduced Sebastopol Rotary's favorite visiting Rotarian, the one and only **Dr. Dan Bornstein**. Dan did not say whether or not he had a patient under anesthesia awaiting his return.

Prez Dan introduced his wife **Fran**, **Edwin Wilson** introduced his wife, **Diana**.

NEW MEMBER INDUCTION

Jack Blasco reintroduced new member **Sue Engle**, who was a one-time member, left the club for a time saw the light and rejoined. Welcome back, **Sue**. You are without a doubt the first Sebastopol Rotarian to be inducted virtually.



ANNOUNCEMENTS

A Rotary (Club of Sebastopol) Reflection: Past Sebastopol Rotary President and Past Sebastopol Citizen of Year in 1989 **Tim Moore** arose to talk about his great experiences as a Rotarian and as a Citizen of the Year. Sitting at **Tim's** side as he was riding in a limousine was his 1 ½ year old daughter, **Meredeth**. She is now Rotarian **Meredeth Bertacco**.

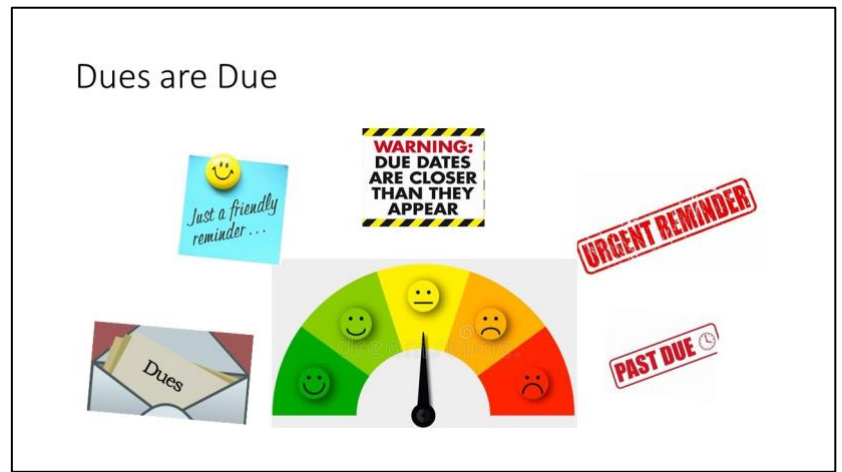
A Rotary (Club of Sebastopol) Reflection

Tim Moore



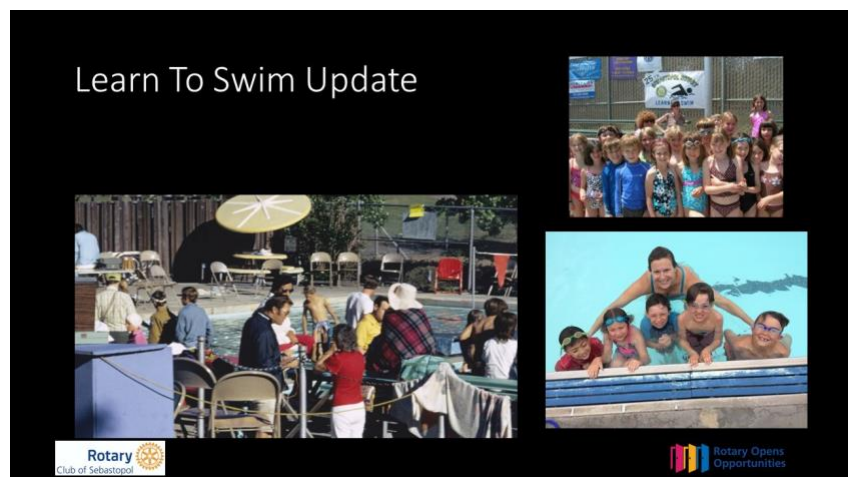
DUES ARE DUE!

Prez Dan mentioned that dues are due and can be paid either by check or online by credit card. If you have any questions, refer to an email that **Ken Jacobs** sent out to the membership on 7/10.



Greg Jacobs and **Rick Wilson** explained what was going on with our club's legendary Learn to Swim Program, as well as the Sebastopol Sea Serpents. We had to pull the plug on this year's program, and the fall backup plan, which would have taught 370 3rd graders who we could not teach as second graders this spring, because of the pandemic, as well.

There were several reasons why we had to cancel the fall program: (1) because of the pandemic, instructors could not enter the pool, and had to teach from the deck. They could not enter the pool and teach from eye level. This makes it difficult to gain the child's trust. (2) Most of our instructors were retired volunteers, and we worried that this concept would no longer appeal to them. (3) The participation of the students this fall is uncertain, schools might not even be in physical session, and if they don't return, the schedule will be either one week in school and then one week learning remotely from home, making it impossible to complete the program in four weeks. (4) The schools allow no field trips.



One positive note, though; when **Greg** and **Rick** heard from **Lehla Irwin**, the coach of the Sebastopol Sea Serpents, that the team was in financial troubles. They lost a significant revenue source this year when The City of Sebastopol banned fireworks sales within the city. **Rick** and **Greg**, never letting a good chance to help go them by, resolved to help her. **Lehla** helps with the Rotary's Learn to Swim Program every year, donating her time to training the volunteers who help the kids. She also helps teach the kids in the water. **Rick** suggested a fund-raising letter like the ones that we have done in the past for other organizations. He drafted a letter for the Sea Serpents, signed by five former Serpent coaches including **Greg** and **Norm Stupfel**, asking for help from 600 former swimmers and parents. So far over \$10,000 has been raised to help Sea Serpent with their expenses.



There will be a SCARC meeting on July 30th. For details contact **Scott Briggs**.

RECOGNITIONS

Frank and Kathy Mayhew celebrated 26 years of wedded bliss by enjoying a fine meal along with a bottle of Turley's wine at Cannettis restaurant in Forestville.



Jack and Ruthie Dunlap are going to celebrate their 5th anniversary by taking a trip to Lake Solono on July 20th and returning July 22nd.

Both couples were dinged \$5. **Jack and Ruthie's** anniversary was July 18th, and **Frank and Kathy's** was July 16th.



Mia Del Prete and Greg Jacobs were both dinged \$10 for adding a few more grey hairs. **Greg** walked his pooch on his July 17th birthday and **Mia** took a trip to Lake Almanor for hers on July 18th.

Robin Maybury's father just celebrated his 95th birthday, believe it or not! His **mother** is 96--looks like you have some healthy genes **Robin**.



Nao Noguchi along with three generations of family took a July 4th back packing trip starting at Ebbetts Pass. They took a section of Pacific Coast Trail and camped at Upper Kenny Lake for four nights. All the time **Nao** was hauling a 30lbs backpack. **Nao** has COPD so that qualifies as work.



🍎 THE PROGRAM 🍎

Aleia Coate introduced today's speaker, Sebastopol Fire Chief Bill Braga. Chief Braga was born and raised in Sebastopol, on an apple farm, no less, is a little younger than **Greg Jacobs** (who may have taught him how to swim), and went to Analy High School and then SRJC and is a Police Academy graduate. He married his high school sweetheart and has been married 45 years. He spent two years with the Sebastopol Police Department as a reserve Police Officer. To date he has spent 36 years with the Sebastopol Fire Department, 10 years as Fire Chief.

The Sebastopol fire department is considered a combination department, meaning most of the firefighters are volunteers and he was just recently allowed to hire a full-time firefighter, their first, for daytime shifts, Monday to Friday. They have scheduled another one for next year, but he isn't sure how the pandemic will affect budgets. He is always very impressed with the volunteers, they are dedicated and hardworking, serving almost 1300 calls per year, which, as you can imagine, is a lot for a small-town volunteer fire department. They are appreciative also of the support that Rotary has offered through grants over the years, which has helped them buy defibrillators, protective equipment and more.

He described the last three years as "*not easy*". The huge fires in 2017, Tubbs, and 2019, Kincaid, with a flood in between, has made the last couple of years a real struggle. He is looking forward to retirement and we don't blame him.

During the Tubbs fire of October 2017, which started in Calistoga, his volunteer firefighters spent 12 days straight in the action, three fire engines with 22 firefighters, logging over 1700 hours helping out with the fires. After that, they thought they were all done with big fires for the rest of their careers. Then came the atmospheric river of February of 2019, which came in quick and flooded the Barlow, the Community center and several homes in Sebastopol. Once again, the volunteers stepped up and worked hard for days to support the local population.

And then came the Kincaid fires in October of 2019. Once again, his firefighters stepped up and worked hard for 11 days, three engines, 21 fighters, all from Sebastopol, over 2000 hours of fighting fires. And on top of that, PG&E started cutting off power to head off the fires spreading.

October 27th 3:30 in the morning, Bill got a call from the county authorities, and was told that he needed to evacuate the entire town of 8000 people. He was struggling to get a proper handle on that one. At 7am he looked out of his office window and saw a complete gridlock due to people following the evacuation orders. Traffic was gridlocked all the way along Bodega highway all the way up the coast. That trouble led them to realize they needed a new evacuation plan for the future, which they're now developing.

Bill thinks the PG&E power outages are going to be with us for a while, they've already been alerted to it.

Regarding the pandemic, he encouraged everyone to follow the guidelines, wear our masks and stay socially distant. He said the department responds to emergencies just as usual, but they are wearing masks, both for their own and our safety. The big push right now, with the new health orders, closing down businesses, are backed by statistics and science, and though everyone might not love them and some even hate them, but they are working, so he recommends we all follow them, in order for us to beat this pandemic.

Greg Jacobs asked about the fireworks on July 4th, and Bill said there were some families, especially in Cloverdale, who managed to get some rockets in the sky. The Chief helps with information around and monitoring of the fireworks situation and encourages people to not go nuts. Most of the fires he has seen from fireworks has actually been from garbage cans catching fires after people have cleaned up. He was sad that the city shut it off this year.

Aleia asked about the new evacuation plan and whether it was available for people to see and familiarize themselves with, and he answered that it is not done yet, but as soon as it is, it will be shared. He expanded to point out that Sebastopol has four state highways going through town, which complicates the process, but that as soon as it's done, it'll be out there.



🍎 THE FINAL BELL 🍎

Prez Dan announced a nice gift to the Learn to Swim program in the Chief's name, then called it all to a halt from the Dilley garage, see you again next week!

If you want to be present in the Dilley garage for future meetings, get in touch with **Prez Dan** and let him know, and he'll make a list and plan to ensure the social distance.

🍎 FUTURE PROGRAMS 🍎

July 24: Dee Schweitzer, Sonoma County Grand Jury

Dee Schweitzer is a trainer with the California Grand Jurors Association (www.cgja.org) traveling throughout the state training new civil grand jurors. She served on the Sonoma County Civil Grand Jury 2017-2018 term and as Foreperson during the 2018-2019 term. In 2017-2018 term, she was Chair of Cities and Special Districts Committee and active on the Editorial Committee. Dee was born and raised in New York and moved to the San Francisco North Bay Area with her husband and two children in 1980. Dee was Director of Quality and Compliance in a community-based organization (CBO) providing behavioral health services in Marin, Napa and Sonoma Counties. She has certification as a HIPPA privacy expert (CHPE) and is also a California licensed life and health agent. In retirement, she provides compliance consultation for social service and behavioral health agencies.



She is a board-certified registered art therapist (ATR-BC) who developed a specialty as a cognitive art therapist providing mental health and substances abuse services at all levels of behavioral health care. Her approach embraces the principles of existential therapy in a social rehabilitation model. She also taught these subjects in many Bay Area colleges and universities. Before embarking on a career in behavioral health, Dee was a graphic artist in New York as well as a flight attendant. Dee has been a volunteer docent at the Museums of Sonoma County History and Art Museum. Her favorite sport activity is swimming and she starts each day swimming laps before sunrise. Dee is an adoring grandparent to her grandson; and her son and daughter, both married, live in the San Francisco Bay Area.

July 31: Keller McDonald, Sonoma County Swifts – Now you see them, now you don't!



Keller McDonald has been a Rotarian for nearly 35 years, but he has been a birder even longer. **Keller** started birding on a family camping trip to the Sierras when he was 12. His excitement at seeing his first Western Tanager prompted his dad to buy him a bird book and loan him the family's binoculars ... and he was hooked for life! Bird Study was the first merit badge he earned as a Boy Scout. In college, he took every bird-related class offered at UC Davis. He married a birder, and together they have traveled with binoculars and bird guides to birding spots across North, Central and South America; Scotland; Israel; and Japan. **Keller** says, "Birding, like Rotary, is something you can do every day wherever you are, anytime - day or night!" **Keller** has identified over 700 of North America's 914 bird species. His kids know his birding bent makes him a little strange, but they've learned to live with it. **Keller** will share the mysteries of the Vaux's Swift – one of Sonoma County's special winged treasures.