



# The Appleknocker

## Sebastopol Rotary Club's Weekly Bulletin

Gil Sanborn: Russian Info Warfare



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**Scribe:** Tony Given  
**Photog.:** R. Maybury, D. Schreibman, HH  
**Editors:** P.Dirden, D. Still, J. Holst, T. Boag, HH  
**President 2020/2021:** Dan Rasmus



"All the News that Fits We Print"

### BEFORE THE BELL

About 50 people including Rotarians and their spouses and guests gathered to attend this first Triple -T (Thirsty Third Thursday) event together on this gorgeous evening of September 24th at Balletto Vineyard's Picnic area. It was great seeing people in real life. Zoom is a good substitute, but there is nothing like the real-life social mixing, with face masks of course. Our very own **Mario Ramos** prepared an excellent selection of food, you had your choice of chicken or beef fajitas, chili rellenos or chili verde. **PDG John Blount** said, "connecting together in person is what drives our club and yet our number one priority in these times is safety". Your humble scribe looks forward to many more of these TRIPLE T events (Thirsty-Third-Thursday). In fact, we should change the name to Quadruple-T or (Terrific – Thirsty- Third-Thursday). Hope to see ya in October. Thanks to **David Schreibman** and **Harvey Henningsen** for the bringing the cameras!



Sonoma County YWCA Domestic Violence Hotline 707-546-1234

## ● Future Programs ●

October 2

John Coate  
From “The Farm” to SFGATE

October 9

David Schreibman  
Geocaching

October 16

Jeremy Hurst  
HANWASH: Haiti National Clean  
Water and Health Strategy

October 23

“Secret” Speaker  
Update on Polio Plus  
vis a vis Pandemic

October 30

Rick Wilson  
A Witness to History

## ● Miscellany ●

MAKEUP NOTIFICATIONS—[scottbriggs50@yahoo.com](mailto:scottbriggs50@yahoo.com)

On-line Make-Ups:

[www.RotaryEClubOne.org](http://www.RotaryEClubOne.org)

Domestic Violence Hotline:

**707-546-1234**

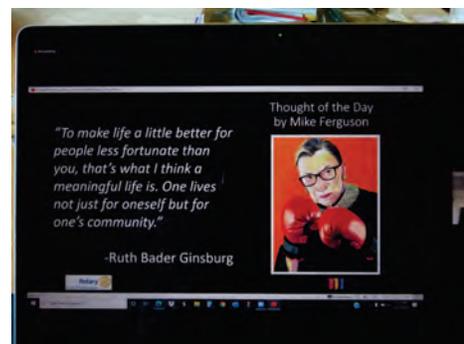
**[sebastopolrotary.com](http://sebastopolrotary.com)**

Your humble scribe zoomed into the meeting at approximately noon. Fellow Rotarians in the breakout room were **Mike Ferguson, Keller McDonald, Lu Frazier, Mia Del Prete**, and more. All enjoying the fellowship and comradery that Rotary offers.

## ● AT THE BELL ●



Our fearless leader AKA **Prez Dan Rasmus** brought the hammer down on the Roto Bell at 12:15 on the dot from the beautiful Russian River Vineyards in Forestville. He started by thanking **Troy McAdams** for hosting the meetings at his location at Discount Alley. **Dan** said that there is no truth to the rumor that **Troy** tried to sell the Roto Bell for a \$1.99. **Harry Polley** started things off by leading us in honoring Old Glory. **Mike Ferguson** provided us with the thought for the day, a poignant statement from the late Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg: “To make life a little better for people less fortunate than you, that’s what I think a meaningful life is. One lives not just for oneself but for one’s community”. Spoken like a true Rotarian.



## 🍎 VISITING ROTARIANS & GUESTS 🍎

Prez Dan introduced past district governor, and member of the Sebastopol Sunrise Club, Bruce Campbell

## 🍎 ANNOUNCEMENTS 🍎

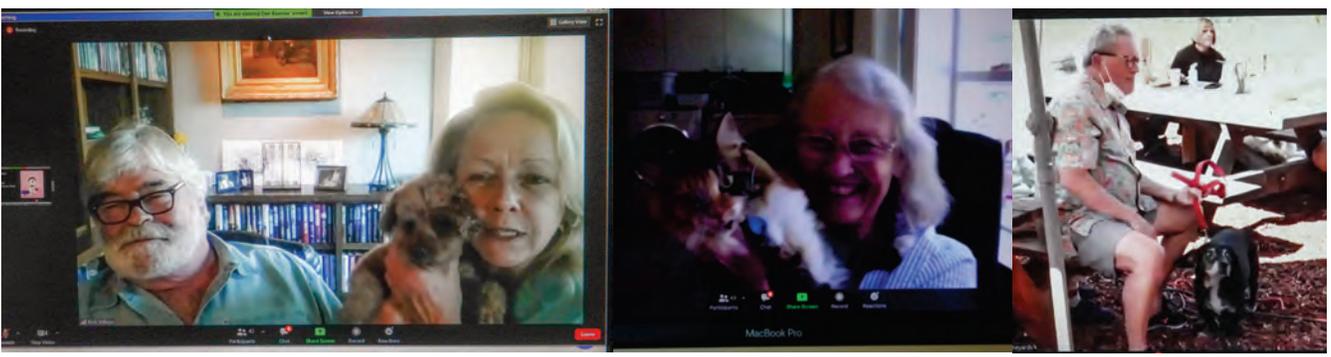


**Dan** gave a recap of our very first Third Thursday event which was a rousing success. It's great to bump elbows with so many fellow Rotarians.

**Lu Frazier** announced that we will be having a Foundation raffle on October 23rd. Online recurring donor participants automatically get 4 tickets. Ticket cost is \$20 per ticket or 6 tickets for \$100. Winner of the Raffle being held on October 23rd will receive a basket full of many prizes. Call **Lu** and order your tickets now. The District Conference and Virtual Dinner will be held October 24 from 5pm to 7pm.

Seven hardworking Rotarians showed up at the Foodbank on September 17<sup>th</sup> to sack many pounds of potatoes to give to the less fortunate.

Today was the day Rotarians honored their lovable, trusting, four-legged furry friends. There was an assortment of dogs, both small and large, and several felines.



## RECOGNITIONS



**Larry Ford** and wife **Gerry** were enjoying a trip to Oregon and they in eastern Oregon near the town of Walla Walla. They were experiencing the effects of the forest fires. **Larry** was celebrating his September 25th birthday.

**Diana Rich** and her husband **Daniel** took a trip along Sonoma County Coast to celebrate their September 20th anniversary.



## PROGRAM



**Rick Wilson** picked up the mic to introduce our guest speaker, and member of the Rotary Club of Novato Sunrise, **Gil Sanborn**. **Gil** is a civilian aide to the Secretary of the Army (CASA), has held that position since 2008, and is an expert on information warfare. He became interested in information warfare in the 1980's, after learning his Father's cousin was Soviet agent. After 9-11, he adopted a platoon, and provided support to the soldiers, and their families. Because of his work, he was nominated by several Generals to the CASA position.

He spoke about how engagement in information warfare is part and parcel of the Russian intelligence policy. They actively engage in information warfare to purposely undermine political and economic systems, sew mistrust, and force states to make decisions favorable to Russia. In 2017, the US Government called out Russia for engaging in information warfare against the United States. Russia's interest in information warfare goes back to the days of the Soviet Union. The KGB actively sought to find foreigners to carry out the work of the Soviets, and undermine government. **Vladimir Putin**, as a KGB agent in Germany, actively recruited foreigners to serve as Soviet agents. Despite the fall of the Soviet Union, the Russian government actively sought to become a superpower again, and information warfare was the weapon of choice. The push by western powers to add former Soviet states to NATO, and the fall of dictators, drove Russia and **Putin** to re-double their efforts, and to declare any attempts to spread western political philosophies in former Soviet states as an act against Russia. The United States has actively sought to suppress Russian expansionism. In 2015, the United States Army sent a large regime of 30,000 troops through Eastern Europe to intimidate Russia.

**Gil** spoke about how information warfare works. It's a game that involves social engagement on social networking sites, by spreading conspiracy theories, and false narratives on those sites. Foreign advisories use Bots to spread mis-information through ghost social media accounts. They have click farms, where thousands of phones are programmed to like and share posts containing false information. All of this increases the visibility of the posts. The more likes and shares a post receive, the greater visibility the post receives, the more people will follow the poster or the group, and the less likely the user will do the research to determine if the story is real. He also spoke about troll farms, including one in St Petersburg, Russia, known as the Internet Research Agency. People working in these farms engage unsuspecting users to become followers. They groom followers to believe their posts, share their posts, and slip in false/misleading information. Employees at IRA described the place as a factory of lies. **Gil** shared an example of a religious group that actively engaged users, and slips in false damning information, causing people to share the false information.

**Gil** noted that the military sees information and cyber warfare as a threat to our country and our democracy. They have a strategy to fight information warfare, but nothing to educate citizens. **Gil** noted that US Cyber Command is actively detecting and disrupting cyber-attacks in advance of the November election.

 THE FINAL BELL 

President Dan thanked Gil for an informative presentation, and brought the hammer down at 1:15pm.

NOTE: Due to the heat and smoke expected Friday, we will be meeting on Zoom, and not in person.



 LETTERS TO THE EDITOR 

Dear Editors,

I understand you go through quite a 'palaver' each week producing the superb AppleKnocker Newsletter for us. I'm very grateful and like my daughter's lovely cat, Skyler, who you have seen on Zoom, I'm very curious. How does it all come together and who performs this magic?

Enquiring minds want to know, and so does the Crazy Brit.

Thank you.

Robin Maybury

## **October 2: John Coate – From “The Farm” to SFGATE**



As a San Francisco teenager in the 1960s, he chose not to go to college but rather to join a spiritual, back-to-the-land tribe that started what was for most of the 70s the largest collective living enterprise in the USA, called The Farm in Summertown, Tennessee. During that time (1970-83), he lived collectively and had no money of his own. It started in SF living with a group on buses that traveled all around the USA visiting colleges and churches until we settled on 1700 acres in Tennessee. He worked as a farmer, carpenter, mechanic, truck and tractor driver and book salesman.

From 1978-82 he lived with other Farm members in urban settings: in New York City where they collectively squatted in a building and founded a free ambulance service and then in Washington DC where the collective helped found the first bilingual free clinic in DC. His experiences with this large extended community taught him a lot about what works and doesn't work in group interaction.

This led directly to him being employee #2 at The WELL, which was described by Wired! Magazine as the "world's most influential online community." Though the title was "Marketing Director and Conference Manager," in fact, from 1986 through 1991, he was the first "Online Community Manager," now a professional field in its own right, meaning his main job was the care and growth of the social aspects of the network. The Well was influential because it showed people how great the possibilities are for developing meaningful human relationships primarily using networked computing.

He co-founded SF Gate in 1994, one of the first major news websites. He's also worked at the Electric Frontier Foundation, techsoup.org, and Mendocino County Public Broadcasting. He currently works with an international consortium and think tank called EdgeRyders (edgeriders.eu). We use online dialogue and data analysis to help bring together talented people working on social benefit projects, and to help influence policy in areas related to climate, information technology, the future of work, and other aspects of social advancement.

## **October 9: David Schreiber - Geocaching**



David has been married for over 38 years and has three children, including a set of fraternal twins. There are three grandsons between Rocklin and Orange County. He makes as much time as he can for his family. Though he largely grew up in Boston and New York, he graduated from SRJC in 1978 and Berkeley in 1980 after his family moved to Sonoma County.

He took his Mathematics degree and three years' experience running an Amway business, and started a career in the cash register business in 1980 that continues today. He's owned multiple small businesses and has been a real estate investor for over thirty years.

You know him as a Past President (2016-17) and a Board member of both the club and the SREF. He's also volunteered and been a Board member for Junior Achievement for over twenty years. He's got many interests including travel, golf and photography.

But today, what's most important is David's 11-year history as an avid geocacher. He's found over 4000 hidden treasure boxes, called geocaches, in 8 countries and 18 states, and he's hidden over 220 for others to find. He's found at least one geocache on every calendar day of the year. The furthest away is in Mykonos Greece, Hawaii is the furthest west, and Seoul Korea is the furthest east.