



The Appleknocker

Sebastopol Rotary Club's Weekly Bulletin

John Namkung - Assisting Ukrainian Refugees



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"All the News that Fits We Print"



BEFORE THE BELL



A new day, a new start, a new leaf, a new plan, a new set of ideas, a new way, a new deal, a brand new thing. – Are you ready for The Rotary Club of Sebastopol's new year? I hope so. It's going to be new.

Also before the bell – time to pay your dues to be a part of such a great club. **Lu Frazier** was struggling gamely to overcome technical problems with the credit card machine and to satisfy all of the members who were ready to pay up. It was suggested that Lu just take the credit cards home and bring them back when she is done with them next week. That suggestion didn't get far.



AT THE BELL



President Hal Kwalwasser, either channeling Judge Judy or practicing for the next Supreme Court vacancy, gavelled the meeting to order by pounding his hammer on the lectern. (**Mr. President**, that bell is there for a reason). He then called on **Ellen Harrington** to lead the pledge of allegiance.

Following the flag salute **President Hal** called on **Keller McDonald** to lead us in song and provide the thought for the day, from Albert Einstein:

"Learn from yesterday, live for today, hope for tomorrow. The important thing is not to stop questioning."



Sonoma County YWCA Domestic Violence Hotline 707-546-1234

Future Programs

July 15, 2022

Donald Laird - Taking Flight; The World of Drones

July 22, 2022

C. Jane Taylor - Spirit Traffic

July 29, 2022

Special Club Budget Meeting

Coming Events

July 27, 2022

Rotary Day At Redwood Empire Food Bank

Miscellany

MAKEUP NOTIFICATIONS: scottbriggs50@yahoo.com

On-line Make-Ups:
www.RotaryEClubOne.org

Domestic Violence Hotline:
707-546-1234

sebastopolrotary.com

VISITING ROTARIANS & GUESTS

From the Rotary Club of Sebastopol Sunrise, recent past president David Mark Raymond was our guest.

Also visiting was Rotarian Gerard Giudice, co-owner of Sally Tomatoes, who is now catering our lunches.

[Gerard and Sally Tomatoes hit the ball out of the park! -Ed.]

Ellen Harrington introduced Maria Robinson and **Dorothy Rodella** introduced Andriy Lesyshyn.



About-to-be-newest members Terrie Wallin and Mario Balistreri were introduced by **Greg Jacobs** and **Aleia Coate**, respectively.



Steve Beck introduced his now-twice-retired wife Terry, and **Dan Rasmus** introduced his wife Fran and his mother, Irene.

[Look out, **Steve**: Terry is about to find out why you know so much about *Days of Our Lives*. -Ed.]



REMEMBERING BOB CUGINI



[Induction of New Members](#)



Jackie Moreira dutifully records Bob Cugini's "Thought for the Day" ... on her Blackberry ... ☺



President Hal announced that former Sebastopol Rotarian **Bob Cugini** recently passed away. **Jack Blasco** provided the following remembrance.

Bob and I both joined the club around 16 years ago. **Bob** grew up in Connecticut and I grew up in New York, and I always felt that we had a special connection, both of us being east coast transplants.

Bob was an active member of our club. He served on our board of directors. He was there at our service projects, and especially at our social events where he was co-chair of our annual club picnic for many years. His sense of humor and love of fun always brought a smile.

His wife Julie, although not a Rotarian, was a familiar face at our meetings and events as well. In fact it was Julie who designed the peace garden that our club built at the Center for the Arts.

Several years ago **Bob** had a debilitating stroke that left him with significant limitations. This club came together and we donated time, money, materials, and expertise to remodel **Bob's** house to accommodate his wheelchair so he and Julie could continue to live there together. I was never prouder to be a Rotarian. **Bob** didn't stop coming to meetings, and his caregiver Willy became another member of our Rotary family. He continued to co-chair the picnic and participate in club activities to the extent that his limitations allowed.



Last year Julie's health challenges dictated that they leave the area to be closer to family, and although we said goodbye, I always hoped I would see **Bob** again. I will remember **Bob** for his kindness, his generosity, his sense of humor, his determination, and his grit. He was a great Rotarian.





THE COMING YEAR



President Hal took the lectern to discuss his ideas for his upcoming presidential year. You might ask the following questions:

Will the meetings be different?

Probably.

President Hal wants to make the meetings more lively. To that end he supports the idea of community issue oriented speakers to help us understand local needs. He wants to have some debate/panel type programs as well.

You might not get a chance to brag about your birthday this year but you will have an opportunity to be a part of "*The Rotary News*". That's right, everybody becomes an amateur journalist and reports on findings. Findings? Sounds like fun.

There might even be meetings without speakers or with shortened programs to invite more social time and club discussion. Surveys have shown that a lot of members would look forward to this. We will bring back Happy Hours and Friendship Dinners, two popular programs from the Pre-Covid days.

Will the Budget Process be different?

Probably.

President Hal wants to get more club members involved in the budget process. After all, it is their money. So let's spend it right. Hal would like to see a Major Project being funded. Something that will make the community sit up and take notice. Who's got an idea? Bring it forward. **President Hal** is all about input from membership. We'll be discussing the budget in detail on June 29.



THE PROGRAM



John Namkung - A Journey to the Poland/Ukraine Border to Assist Ukrainian Refugees



Dan Rasmus introduced our speaker, John Namkung. As the Russian invasion of Ukraine became imminent, John traveled to the Ukraine-Poland border to assist with what would become a flood of displaced persons. The Russian invasion forced thousands of people, many of them women and children, to pack up and go, usually with nothing.

John assisted with this flood of people. He transported individuals from the border regions to the interior, routinely driving more than six hours each day. He also delivered food to shelters in the area, and helped distribute goods at the border crossing.

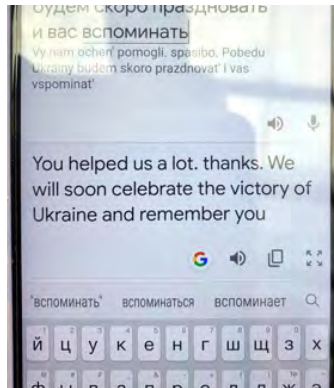


John's talk included a number of videos showing conditions at the border crossing. Many humanitarian organizations set up tables and tents on the Polish side of the border, offering a variety of goods and services. John helped one group distribute suitcases to refugees who crossed the border with their only possessions carried in plastic bags.

A variety of buildings, including schools and churches, have been turned into temporary shelters to house the flood of refugees. John's video of folks sleeping on mattresses and blankets on the floor was a stark contrast to our comfortable life here in Sonoma County.

Although the situation in Ukraine is grim, John reminded us that "the best of humanity shines, even in the darkest times." The opportunity to see this first-hand and to forge personal relationships with those he helped is what led John to the border, rather than staying home and supporting the relief effort with a cash donation.

One family that John transported from the border region to Krakow included a grandmother, mother and two daughters, ages 8 and 13, and the family dog. John concluded his presentation by reporting that a local group has been formed in the Lone Pine Village area with the purpose of supporting this family. The family intends to relocate to the West County area and the Lone Pine Ukrainian Family Aid group has been formed to help them with expenses. You can Google "Lone Pine Ukrainian Family Aid" for more information about this effort.



THE FINAL BELL



President Hal brought the final hammer down at 1:30 PM to bring his first meeting to a close. Next week will he hit the bell or the wood? Stay tuned to find out.



FUTURE PROGRAMS



July 15, 2022 - Donald Laird - Head of Computer Science Department at SRJC - Taking Flight: The World of Drones

Donald Laird's jovial, positive energy fills his computer science classes; he can transform a room within his first two sentences. And his constant curiosity helps keep the department he chairs in tune with the latest trends in technology. He'll entertain and educate us on exciting drone technology.

July 22, 2022 - C. Jane Taylor - Spirit Traffic

Spirit Traffic recounts how, at the age of 50, the author learned to ride a motorcycle, overcame the terror of navigating her steep dirt driveway in Vermont, and, three days after her son's college graduation, set off with him and her yoga-teacher husband (his stepdad) on a 10,000-mile two-wheel adventure that took them all into uncharted territory—both as novice riders, and as a family.

July 29, 2022 - Special Budget Meeting

On July 29 the Club will hold a club meeting for the purpose of guiding the Board of Directors in the finalizing of the budget. The principal goal of the meeting will be for all club members to decide which projects to fund, and in what rank order of priority. The Board will then finalize the budget by working out an allocation of available funds to projects consistent with the direction of the Club. A detailed explanation of this process has been distributed to all club members by email. Please contact President Hal if you have questions.