



THE ACORN

THE ROTARY CLUB OF FAIR OAKS

JANUARY 24, 2016

Rotary



AMERICA'S SECRET WAR IN LAOS



The Rotary Club of Fair Oaks

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Weekly Meetings

We Meet Almost Every Monday Evening

Social Hour 6:15 - 7:00 PM

Dinner & Meeting 7:00 - 8:30 PM

Location: Fair Oaks Community Clubhouse

7997 California Avenue

Fair Oaks

Visitors are Welcome

AMERICA'S SECRET WAR IN LAOS

Speaker: JOE SCHEIMER (RAVEN 42)

Reporter: Keith Walter



Fair Oaks Rotary is proud to have Joe as a member! He is a graduate of Sac State; a distinguished 24-year veteran of the USAF; a 20-year Rotarian where he has served as President of the Rancho Cordova club, Assistant District Governor for Area 8, International Service Chair, GSE Team Leader and Grants Subcommittee Chair; and a proud husband and father of two daughters.

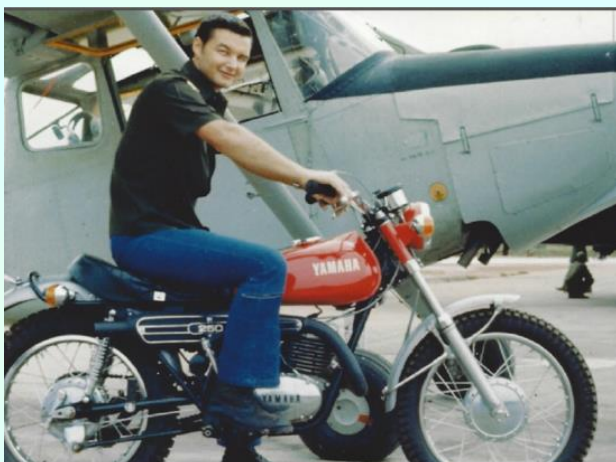


On January 25th, Joe shared the story of American's Secret War in Laos during the Vietnam War.

After a brief biography, he reminded us the Vietnam Conflict had begun for the US in 1965 based on the 1964 Gulf of Tonkin "incidents". Many in the audience remember how divisive the Vietnam conflict was. It was never sanctioned as a war and was therefore officially referred to as a "conflict". Much questionable information was disseminated by the government during this time. The Gulf of Tonkin incident is no exception. The government claimed that there were two attacks by North Vietnam on US Navy destroyers operating in the Gulf of Tonkin in August, 1964. After the second incident, congress passed the Gulf of Tonkin Resolution which authorized the use the US military in Southeast Asia. There is, to this day, fierce debate about whether the Gulf of Tonkin incidents did or did not actually occur.

Joe explained how President Johnson used the Gulf of Tonkin incident as justification for the US role in Vietnam. Former F-8 pilot (and later Admiral and candidate for vice president) James Stockdale stated in his autobiography that the second attack on US destroyers never happened. Similarly, Laos was officially a neutral country with both North Vietnam and the US actively operating there. The Johnson administration never admitted that it was waging war in Laos, a war in which the US dropped over two million tons of ordinance.

Joe used a map of Southeast Asia to show the Ho Chi Minh Trail and explain how it was a supply chain for the North Vietnamese Army (NVA) fighting in South Vietnam. Since the US was not officially in Laos, Joe and other members of the military sent to fight in Laos had no military identification and were identified as "Forest Rangers". The US Ambassador and the CIA were in charge of their daily operations.



This is Joe on his motorcycle, in front of his Cessna O-1 Bird Dog. While he was in Laos, Joe had a fairly serious motorcycle accident that put him in the hospital. Because of the accident, Joe did not return to Laos for a second tour of duty as a Raven. Joe stated that the motorcycle accident probably saved his life.

AMERICA'S SECRET WAR IN LAOS

Experienced forward air controllers and fighter pilots were recruited in Vietnam to become forward air controllers in the Secret War in Laos. They flew old planes, specifically T-28s and Cessna O-1 Bird Dogs, to photograph, identify with flares and even bomb the NVA supply chain along the Ho Chi Minh Trail. Information provided by the Ravens was used to direct bombing missions against the North Vietnamese operating along the Ho Chi Minh Trail.

The planes were flimsy and they often flew through serious ground fire. This was hazardous duty in the extreme. Estimates of the fatality rate for Raven pilots range from 30 to about 50 percent. The Ravens, some of whom were already experienced fighter pilots, felt they were the best pilots in the world. They were probably correct.

The code name for this operation was Project Steve Canyon, or Project 404, and the men working on the project used the call sign Raven. Joe was Raven 42. He was based out of Paksé in Laos. Approximately 205 Ravens served during the 10 years of the Vietnam War. Today many of the remaining Ravens reunite once a year as a group calling itself the Edgar Allen Poe Literary Society.

Over the years as most of the material from this time has become declassified, movie footage taken from the war has become available. Joe shared footage he took with a Canon Super 8 movie camera as well as footage taken by Speedvision taped for TV interviews.

If you are interested in learning more about the Secret War in Laos Joe provided the following references:

- www.ravens.org
- Book by Christopher Robbins, The Ravens
- <http://blogs.egusd.net/tor/interviews/vietnam-war/>
- Time of Remembrance (TOR) in response to AB 78



Many of the remaining Ravens have a reunion every year. Attendees at the 2015 meeting of the "Edgar Allen Poe Literary Society" are shown at the left.

THE CRAB FEED

The Date: Saturday - February 20, 2016

The Place: Divine Savior



Karen Romines – For the MegaDraw Karen needs:

- Food for the River Cats suite
- Two nights in a hotel at Disneyland for up to four people

To raise money for the \$1,000 MegaDraw prize, members will be able to buy two raffle tickets for the price of one.



Keith Walter is handling sponsorships. He has a long list of potential sponsors. Please help Keith sign up sponsors. With your support we can raise thousands of dollars through sponsorships.

Friday, February 12 is the absolute deadline for sponsorships to be placed in the program.

Contact Keith or Keith will contact you.



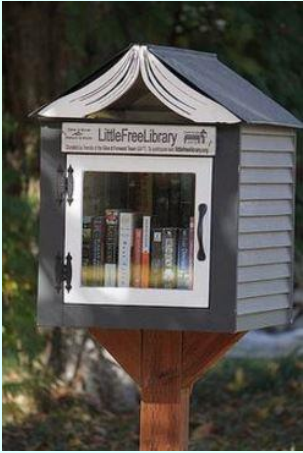
Anne Browning is in charge of ticket sales, seating and entry.

Pay early for your crab feed tickets and get your choice of the still-available tables. Don't wait – the crab feed will sell out, as it always does.

Anne is looking for someone to handle ticket sales next year when she becomes president elect. "If you like puzzles, it's great."



LITTLE FREE LIBRARY PROJECT



Reid Gustafson will be hosting a Little Free Library work party this Saturday (February 6) at the Gustafson residence at 1:00 PM. It will be cancelled if rain is likely. Look for an email update if rain is in the forecast. Contact Reid for more information.



IT'S NEVER TOO LATE MUSIC LESSONS



Cliff Straehley (left) and Jerry Foote are spreading the word about the It's Never Too Late Project, under which senior citizens will receive up to eight free music lessons. Group and individual lessons will be available.

If you would like to help Cliff and Jerry find seniors for music lessons, give Cliff a call.



AN ENGAGEMENT



Kirsten Chang is an associate member and daughter of member Rick Chang,. At Monday's meeting, Rick announced the engagement Kirsten and James Moore.

GUESTS

There were 23 guests at the Monday meeting. This is probably an all-time record for guests at a meeting of the Rotary Club of Fair Oaks. We managed to photograph most of them, with apologies to those that were missed.



Suzanne Jones (middle), guest of Ralph Carhart (right) with member Anne Browning



Rotarians **Diane Woodruff** and **Skip Lawrence**



Rotarian **George Abraham** and his daughter **Tara Abraham**, who is president of the Bella Vista Interact Club



Bill Ash (center) and **Kristine Trackels** (right) with Membership Director Alice Rowe



Tom Slagle, Rotarian



Rotarian **Mike Garcia** (left) and **Greg Dwyer**, guest of Neil Shepherd.



Betsy Gade, Rotarian



Judy Blatchford (center) with husband and members Charley Blatchford and Bev Mark

Additional Guests

Day Switch - Point West Club
Stine Nikolajsen- RYE student
Maria Scheimer - wife of Joe Scheimer
Jessica Scheimer – daughter of Joe Scheimer
Pat Chang - wife of Rick Chang
Pat Vogel - wife of Bob Vogel
Vicke Foote - wife of Jerry Foote
Debra Price - wife of Bruce Hagel

CLUB FOUNDATION

The club and its foundation are working to restructure their relationship. The following, provided by President Pete Schroeder, is a summary of the proposed changes.

The Fair Oaks Rotary Foundation

To increase support for the Club's Foundation (the Foundation) by club members, three changes have been proposed and are under discussion.

- Fundraisers will be "Club Foundation Fundraisers". The proceeds will go to the Foundation. Each fundraiser will be managed by its corresponding fundraiser committee, composed of club members. The Club will be compensated for staffing fundraisers with a percentage of fundraiser revenue for service – otherwise the Club budget would be in the red. The benefit for the Club and the Club Foundation: Contributions will be easier and larger to a 501(c)3. (The Club Foundation is a 501(c)3.)
- The Club will maintain only enough dollars in its treasury to cover operational expenses, plus a buffer, with all additional dollars transferred to the Foundation. Benefit: No Club money will be needed for projects and grants. The Foundation will accumulate larger earnings for more service.
- The Foundation will support Club projects created and approved by the Club. The definition of projects that can be funded with Foundation dollars will be expanded to include international projects and Community projects. Benefit: The Club could serve more, serve better and serve in bigger ways.

These changes would encourage support for the Foundation by all Club members.

Throughout Rotary District 5180, the clubs with foundations are generally run in the manner proposed above:

- All funds raised by the clubs go to their foundations
- The foundations support club projects and grants
- Club treasuries maintain only operating expenses



Club members working on the recreation trail in Phoenix Park.

SAVE THE RAIN

This is part of our continuing series of Acorn articles on Save the Rain. The following was taken almost verbatim from the Save the Rain website. What they fail to note is the fact that the burden of fetching water in Tanzania falls on the women in the households. Fetching water can take as much as ten hours per day. Worse yet, some men with HIV believe that they can be cured by having sex with a virgin. As a result, schoolgirls are sometimes attacked while fetching water. The benefits of the Women's Water Initiative for women and girls are:

- Clean drinking water at home, 24 hours per day
- Minimal time expended fetching water
- More time to pursue an education and work for the betterment of the family
- Greatly reduced number of gastrointestinal ailments
- Greatly reduced probability of being raped and catching AIDS.

The Women's Water Initiative was born as a way to guarantee that children get clean water both at school and at home. The initiative empowers women to build 5000 liter Rain Catchment Systems on their homes. This size system is large enough to sustain a family of 8 with their domestic water needs.

Each woman in the initiative receives the materials and education to construct their own rain catchment system. All the materials are procured by Save the Rain.

Each woman is paired with a teacher that guides her through the construction. Once the system is complete, the women are responsible to repay the cost of the materials and recruit 5 additional women into the program. Each of these systems costs \$420. The systems are funded through a hybrid micro finance loan program.

Instead of paying their loans back, they are paid forward and additional loans are funded. There were 125 women originally enrolled in the program. Within 4 cycles, there will be 15,625 women. With an average of 8 people per household, that means 125,400 people will have access to clean water. This program began in January, 2010. 100% of the loans are being repaid and on time. We have tripled the amount of women enrolled.

During the construction of Esther Njau's (a Tanzanian women) rainwater harvesting system, she expressed her gratitude that we were there to mark the last day her granddaughter would ever walk for water. It was a celebration for all of us. You can see just how simple the construction is and how powerful it's effects can be. Estimated time of construction: one week per home.



This is Felsta Zakaria, she lives in the Maweni village and has 5 children. She was recently walking 5 km to fetch water daily, but is now able to have a successful garden and clean water at home all of the time because of the tank that was built.

INNER WHEEL SPAGHETTI NIGHT

**ALL YOU CAN EAT SPAGHETTI
CAESAR SALAD
GARLIC BREAD
DESSERT**

Big Assortment of Raffle Prizes

Inner Wheel Members Working the Bar and Bussing Tables

**February 29 @ 7:00 PM
Social Hour @ 6:15
The Clubhouse
Upper Floor**

Until 1989, women were not allowed to be Rotary members. The Inner Wheel movement began in England in 1924 when a group of 27 Rotary wives met in a cooling room at Herriot's Turkish Baths (the room was free of charge) in Manchester. Today, Inner Wheel is one of the largest organizations of women in the world, with over 104,000 members in more than 100 countries. Inner Wheel chapters complement and support Rotary clubs and raise money for charities of their choice.

The main objectives of Inner Wheel are:
To promote true friendship
To foster international understanding
To encourage the ideals of personal service

The Fair Oaks Inner Wheel Club was the first Inner Wheel club west of the Mississippi River. The Charter was signed on May 21, 1970, making this a true milestone in the history of Inner Wheel.

Inner Wheel

BUNCO

Saturday February 6

(Reservations must be in by February 3)

Dinner - 5:30 PM

BUNCO

Raffle

And a lot of fun

Clubhouse

6900 Almond Ave, Orangevale

(Go in entrance, then turn left)

Cost: \$12.50 per person

Bring your own wine

Contact Pat Vogel

Phone: 966-9703

Email: pattyvogel4933@gmail.com

FUTURE MEETINGS AND EVENTS

Club Meeting at the Clubhouse	February 1, 2016	Speaker: Oscar Arias Topic: Rotary & Peace
Inner Wheel Bunco Night	February 6 Saturday – 5:30 PM	6900 Almond Ave Orangevale
Club Meeting at the Clubhouse	February 8, 2016	Crab Feed Preparation Beth Wilcoxon, Chair
No Club Meeting	February 15, 2016	
Crab Feed	February 20, 2016	Divine Savior
No Club Meeting	February 22, 2016	
Club Meeting at the Clubhouse	February 29, 2016	Inner Wheel Spaghetti Night (A fundraiser for Inner Wheel)