

THE ACORN

THE ROTARY CLUB OF FAIR OAKS



Lester Snow

Lester Snow spoke on the California water system, its history, the drought and other potential problems with our water delivery system. Lester is Executive Director of the California Water Foundation. He has been the Director of the California Department of Water Resources and our region's Director for the Bureau of Reclamation.

Lester began his talk with a brief description of the statewide interconnected water storage and delivery system which serves 30 million people and irrigates over 5 million acres of farmland. The system includes the State Water Project, the Central Valley Project, and several major aqueducts. Wikipedia is recommended for an excellent overview of the system.

The water system in California is faced with several severe challenges:

- Aging infrastructure, designed when California's population was less than half of today's population.
- Overdrawn and, until recently, completely unregulated groundwater supplies
- Climate change.

At this moment, California is in the midst of the worst drought in its history. Snowpack is nonexistent. Reservoirs are very low and there will be little runoff from the mountains into the reservoirs. Up to 80% of the water the state uses this year will be groundwater, which is being depleted too fast. (Some areas in the Central Valley are sinking one foot per year as water is pumped from the underlying aquifers and San Jose is now 14 feet lower than it was years ago.) Locally, the Folsom reservoir will probably be drawn down to the lowest level in its history because the Bureau of Reclamation is withholding releases from Shasta to reduce water temperatures and protect salmon – and increasing releases from Folsom to compensate.

As an example of aging infrastructure, Lester cited the Sacramento San Joaquin Delta. The Delta has existed since the end of the last ice age and was originally a large freshwater marsh. Beginning in the late 1800s, Chinese labor and then dredgers were used to create levees, channel the flow of water through the Delta and convert most of the Delta for agriculture. The Delta now produces about \$500 million in crops. The levees are not completely adequate and it is feared that a combination of high water and an earthquake could break the levees and flood much of the Delta, rendering it useless (Ed note: supposedly) for agriculture.

Lester briefly discussed the Delta tunnel project, which has been proposed by the Jerry Brown administration. He cited reasons for building the tunnels but, in general, did not mention the many objections raised by opponents of the Delta tunnels.

MEETING HIGHLIGHTS



Ray Ward is recognized by Membership Director Alice Rowe. Ray brought six new members to the club during the past year.



Emeritus member Charley Blatchford celebrated his 80th birthday. In the photo, Charley is paying a generous birthday fine.



James Mann, who has been undergoing dialysis, was able to attend the meeting. James reports that he is doing better.

New members Shelley Weisman and Gus Ballis had their red ribbons removed and became full-fledged members. They are shown with their sponsor, Ray Ward, and their mentors, Peter and Karen Romines.



MORE HIGHLIGHTS



Our club was chartered on March 7, 1946 and will celebrate its 70th anniversary this fiscal year. With that in mind, Club Historian, **Ralph Carhart**, provided a brief history of the club's first 40 years of existence.



Pete Schroeder reported on Camp Winning Hands, where Pete was a counselor last week. The photo (below) is from the Shriner's website. It shows Pete teaching a youngster with hand differences to play guitar. Pete spent five days working with the kids at this camp. The Shriner Hospitals for Children of Northern California sponsored the camp and paid for everything. Pete reported that Rotary made the camp possible.

The kids camped overnight and Pete was housed in a cabin full of 7 – 11 year old boys. Pete reports that he is now, as a result, an expert on zombies and possible the health hazards that can result when a normal person is touched by a zombie, with urinary contamination of the blood being number one on the list.



ANNOUNCEMENTS



Bob Walters announced that Club Foundation will be holding its annual election of members at its next meeting on August 15. Anyone interested in being on the Foundation Board should submit a short written application, in the form of a letter or email to Bob. The application should summarize, along with anything deemed pertinent by the applicant, experience with 501(c)3 organizations. Campaign speeches will not be allowed.



It is difficult to determine meeting attendance in advance, which makes it difficult to buy and serve the right amount of food. Diana Cralle asked that all members RSVP at least two days before a meeting. Suggested mechanisms for RSVPing were contacting Ray Ward via Facebook or Nancy Regan by email.

Perhaps the easiest method might be to RSVP to the weekly meeting notice sent out by Ray Ward every week.



Club Services Director, Dawn Abatamarco, asked for volunteers to serve food at each meeting (2 per meeting) and to do the center pieces at each table.



Marlow Simonetto is managing this year's Fair Oaks Uncorked. We still need wineries and restaurants. Please help Marlow and her committee recruit them.

Also, tickets are now available. Please start selling them.

Maggie Hoy is the organizer for Saturday's Mystery Trip. Maggie revealed three clues:

1. This will be an outdoor event.
2. It may be cold (the weather, that is)
3. Bring a camp chair so you have something to sit on.