



Flywheel

"Service Above Self"

A Weekly Publication of the Rotary Club of Richmond, California

Program for Friday September 10, 2004

Club Meets at La Strada NOT Mira Vista

Richmond City Council Candidates

During the upcoming weeks, 15 candidates for City council will be given 10 minutes each to explain why they should be elected in November. Today Debra Preston, Mindell Penn and Cortland Booze will speak to us.

Door Duty: David Brown and Ted Smith

Program for Friday September 17, 2004

Steve Weir, County Clerk

Door Duty: Erle Brown and

Program of Friday September 3, 2004

Please see page 3

Announcements.

David K. reported that **Hanns Shaper's** Celebration of Life will be held September 12 at 3:00 PM on the 3rd floor of the Hotel Mac. Memorials in Hanns' name may be given to the Rotary Foundation. In order to increase these memorial contributions, Prez Herb asked that reference be made to the matching grant number 53293 and that the memorial gifts be given to Earl Brown. Please mark "In Memory of Hanns Shaper" in the memo field of the check.

Hank Covell reminded the members that the club's dinner & drama night is September 16th. Dinner at the Hotel Mac then a walk across the street to the Masquers Playhouse to see the mystery, thriller comedy, "Ravenscroft".

Last Week

A much missed, grandfatherly looking **Prez Herb** began the meeting by asking retiring **Secretary Joe Nusbaum** to lead the members in the Pledge of Alliance. **Paul Hodgen** inspired us with the thought for the day, and it was a good thought too, unfortunately the details were missed by the Editor.

Recognitions

Prez Herb asked **John Nicol** what happened 40 years ago? John paused, no doubt as he considered the Gulf of Tonkin Resolution and said, "I joined the Rotary after a three year campaign to get in.". After thunderous applause from the members, John also said he had \$50 for the Peres School Project. Bud Martin said he had another \$100 in honor of John. This mini-celebration ended with the reminder that **David Ninomiya** also joined Rotary 40 years ago.

Happy/Sad \$\$\$

Jon, Prez-In-Waiting, Lawlis had real happy dollars for the long anticipated return of Prez Herb from the battlefields of the Civil War (or War Between the States, if you prefer). Jon was also glad for the return of his son from England.

Judy K. had \$5 "interested dollars". Noting her recent volunteer testing for new kindergarteners at Sheldon Elementary School, Judy said that the club should be interested in writing abilities as one new student drew random lines when asked to write his name and another student neatly printed his, first, middle and last name when asked to do the same.

Dandy Don Lau sadly gave his last happy fiver as he now has two kids in college. His second just started at Cal Poly. Going forward, Dandy Don will now be know as No Doe Don. **PDG Warner S.** was happy to visit the Prague Rotary this summer and happy that it has reopened for the four time; beginning in 1918, closed by the fascists in '39, opened by the Allies in '46, closed by the communists in '48, opened by the Prague Spring in

(More info at <http://www.masquers.org/Masquers.html>)
December 2 – Richmond Rotary Holiday Party
December 10 – Rotary Auction and Election

Raffle:

There was almost \$200 in the kitty. Prez Herb asked Councilmember Bates to pick a name, No Doe Don got a chance to have mo' doe but got a free lunch instead. Prez. Herb rang the bell and the meeting was adjourned.

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Upcoming Programs

- 09/24/04 LCDR Ross Sargent, USCG, SF Vessel Traffic Service
- 10/15/04 California Attorney General Bill Lockyer
- 11/05/04 Louis Reynaud Asst Coach for Cal Basketball

Important Dates

- 09/16/04 Masquers Dinner Theater
- 10/06/04 Meet at His Lordships in Berkeley with other area Rotary clubs
- 10/08/04 No meeting
- 12/02/04 Holiday Party at Mira Vista G&CC
- 12/10/04 Annual Holiday Auction and Elections

Door Duty Reminder

09/24/04	Brown Jan	Schwarz Werner
10/01/04	Butt Tom	Schulze Russell
10/08/04	Cameron Tom	Schneider Tom
10/15/04	Cannon Jim	Sanders Dan
10/22/04	Chauvin Sid	Reina Father Nick
10/29/04	Lawlis Jon	Reid Bill

Where to Make Up

San Rafael	Mon	12:15	Seafood Peddler
Albany	Tue	12:30	Solano Grill
El Sobrante	Tue	12:15	Joe's of El Sobrante
Berkeley	Wed	12:15	His Lordships
Hercules	Wed	7:15 am	Hercules Sen. CTR
San Pablo	Wed	12:15	La Strada
El Cerrito	Thu	12:15	Mira Vista G&CC
Pinole	Thu	12:30	Outback Steak House
Vallejo	Thu	12:15	World Holiday Inn

'68, closed by Soviet tanks in the summer of '68 and opened again with Fall of the Wall. Warner was also honored by the Rotary of Hannau Germany (and was on German TV) when he was made an Honorary Life Member of the Hannau club for his many years service to the German people. Warner was "happy" to be able to pay annual dues to two Rotary Clubs.

Looking even more grandfatherly, **Prez Herb** had a happy fiver for his new grand daughter Piper McKay Cole. Herb was also glad to see his son Reyes who had a brief reprieve from war to attend Piper's birth. Piper McKay's name comes from a hero of the Battle of Waterloo, when bagpiper Mckay rallied British troops against the French. Anyway, that's what Prez Herb said.

Paul Hodgen had a bunch of fickle happy/sad dollars because his golf pro wife gets to play free at the Old Head Ireland, but he has to pay for his son's rounds a \$250 a pop. Sounds like Paul's glass is half full though since the whole family will be celebrating their 29th anniversary in Ireland. vacation getaway was something along the lines of Harrison Ford's adventures in *Indiana Jones*. The sad news is that *Lassie* could have been the double bill.

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Your Acting Editor,
Jim Young



Program of September 3, 2004

This program and the next two programs have been energetically organized by Bob Dabney so that the Richmond Rotary can hear directly from nine of the 15 candidates running for Richmond City Council in the General Election, November 2nd. Local media have characterized the large field of candidates as running the gamut from sublime to ridiculous. As in all great democracy's the Richmond voters will get to decide which is which, and, which combination of those two different characteristics will best serve the next four years of Richmond politics.

As an editors note, quotes (“...”) will only be used when I'm pretty damn certain the candidate said the quoted statement. Paraphrasing will be written as narrative text. If possible, candidate points will be summarized in bullet points. *If editorial comment is used at all it will be in italics.*

Prez Herb introduced the first candidate speaker, **Bill Idzerda**.

Bill attended the University of Michigan, is an employee of the City of San Francisco and works in the City office of Energy conservation working on energy budgets. Mr. Idzerda described the following unique positions:

- ❖ He is an advocate for energy stewardship and has run an SF program giving away 2,000 energy efficient refrigerators; believes in energy efficient buildings including being a member of the Green Building Council, drives a Toyota Prius He is also a member of the ACLU the Council on Civil Rights and the Libertarian Party.
- ❖ **Richmond's poor financial condition** is a major issue warranting a full audit of the city's budget so we know where the moneys going so that it can be effectively used or cut.. Other fiscal actions that Idzerda proposed to resolve the city's fiscal condition includes:
 - Reducing taxes.
 - Looking for loans and grants.
 - Eliminating the residential utility tax.
 - Instituting a Greenhouse Gas Tax (*on the city's industries?*)
 - Withdrawing support for the BART public subsidy which he calculates costing \$0.68/mile travel.
 - Rehiring the poor (*or possibly it was core*) city employees that have been laid off.
- ❖ **Safety** is also a big issue in Richmond, Idzerda said he would:
 - Create 911 (*the emergency phone number*) motorcycle rapid response teams to get to incidents more quickly.
 - Increase unarmed foot and bicycle patrols to improve trust in the community.
 - Create roving SWAT teams.
- ❖ **Youth is a “key focus”** for Richmond so Idzerda. would:
 - Promote better school curriculum and supplies, Charter Schools and “Dream Schools” a la San Francisco.
 - Schools need to be more interesting with classes like “the History of Rap Singers” and teaching trades. This would help kids keep from getting bored.
 - He would close the libraries (*city libraries?*) and turn them into “Kid Centers”, increase kids activities and take all the library books and put them in the schools so they have better libraries.
 - *Although the 10 minute speaking limit precluded Mr. Idzerda from providing additional details for his youth/education plan, it was unclear to the writer if he is aware that the school district, like the city, is an independent political subdivision.*
- ❖ **Richmond's growth** would be limited to smaller industries, but he would like to take a look at some of the larger industries to see what might be done with them.

Prez Herb then introduced incumbent **Council Member Nat Bates**.

After flowery praise for Prez Herb and anniversary celebrant John Nicole, including reminiscence of John cheering Nat on at CCCB basketball games many, many years ago, Bates reminded the members of his 25 years on the City Council including two years as mayor of Richmond. He said that the Bates family is totally committed to Richmond with the entire family living in the city. Even though there is lots of criticism of the city, Bates asked that it be remembered that, “We all make mistakes. Everyone makes mistakes.”

Although not quite contrite, Bates noted that the City Council doesn't oversee finance. It is the City Manager that is the CEO and that authority relationship needs to be revisited. He would establish an audit/auditor relationship that reports to the City Council not just to the City Manager. Bates noted that the city's finances are complex including the Port

Authority and an active Redevelopment agency, suggesting that complexity and structure work against the City Council getting the financial information it needs.

Bates said the city does not a climate for business nor a culture that promotes business development. The work ethic itself is a problem at City Hall with three hour lunches common and few employees at their station after 3 PM on Friday. Laying off 250 workers including 12 firefighters may help change that work climate including streamlining the city bureaucracy and establishing a work ethic where employees give top performance for the tp dollar they receive in wages.

Bates is a big supporter of the Point Malote casino and destination resort being proposed by Harrah's Club International. He said it is the biggest deal he's seen in his lifetime in Richmond. \$700MM in private development with no public funding requirement and the creation of 2,100 new jobs that can be filled with people from the community. The project may produce as much as \$50MM a year in new revenue for the city.

Councilmember Bates experience based presentation left the writer thinking of the words of the late local philosopher and agent of change Eldridge Cleaver, "If you're not part of the solution, your part of the problem".

Prez Herb thanked Council member Bates for his presentation and introduced the members to **candidate Tony Thurmond**.

Mr. Thurmond was born in the East Bay but raised in Philadelphia where he joined the Rotary. Mr Thurmond said that he is running for city council because of the problems it is facing and he wants to help lead Richmond out of those problems. Tony pointedly noted that if Richmond ran on Rotary's Four Way Test, it would not have the problems it is now facing. "Richmond's problems are an embarrassment to the community. Solving those problems will go a long way to change the greater community's perception of Richmond".

Mr. Thurmond lives with his wife and daughter in May Valley. He currently works as a non-profit administrator operating job training programs for underemployed low skill young people in San Francisco specifically focusing on skill sets that will help his clients secure jobs in biotechnology. He hopes to use his non-profit management experience to help the city resolve its problems.

Apart from the general perception problem created by Richmond's current budget crisis would establish the following priorities:

- ❖ Seek and promote top quality leadership within the city, running the city like a non-profit (*which technically it is*), Tony said that he would NEVER say, "I don't know why we have a budget deficit". 'If elected, Richmond tax payers will know what they are getting for their tax dollars.'
- ❖ Stabilize the city's budget through the promotion of economic development.
- ❖ Reduce neighborhood violence by teaching young people that words not guns/violence are the way to solve their problems and express their frustrations.
- ❖ Use city resources to address the equally embarrassing state of local education found in the WCCUSD, primarily through the re-establishment of the public library system as a key after school service provider network. Thurmond noted he is very sympathetic with all the parents who have told him they would not send their children to the local public schools, but sees the schools as another "must improve" problem facing Richmond.
- ❖ Always being accessible to Richmond voters and tax payers.

Tony Thurmond concluded his presentation requesting the support of the members of the Richmond Rotary and inviting everyone to his campaign mixer at the new restaurant Ground Round at Hilltop (*the old Red Lobster*) Saturday the 11th at 4 PM.