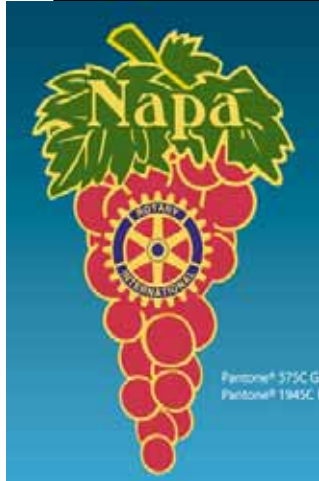


The Napa Rotagram

January 14, 2009



Thought of the Day
President Gary came up with one of his favorite pearls of wisdom: "Only those who risk going too far can possibly find out how far they can go."
T.S. Eliot

Doug Koford led the Pledge of Allegiance.

Our Visiting Rotarians: **Debra Matteri**, Commercial Loans (Umpqua Bank), Petaluma Valley; and **Cap Lyons**, Commercial/Industrial Construction, Oakland.

Guest of Rotarians: **Gary Norman**, representing Edward Jones.

Announcements:

Don't miss one of the better crab feeds on Saturday, January 24. It's a benefit for the Boys and Girls Club. 800 tickets have already been sold!

Now is the time to distribute dictionaries to Napa third graders. Find out from **Tim Cooney** when this will happen. We also have to collect more money to pay for the dictionaries.



All Rotarians are invited to drop by the Pathway Home Project on Super Bowl Sunday when the veterans are watching the game on the TV the Rotarians donated. All 100

betting squares have been sold for the pool.

We are now the owners of a baseball team. We are sponsoring a little league team.

The Cycle for Sight event is three months away, on April 18. Many sponsorships are already in place. We are hoping for the same numbers as last year.

Please think about how you can help. Restaurants and wineries are on board and the popular band Pride and Joy will entertain the visitors and bikers.



Don Fretz was honored with a Paul Harris fellowship for his brother.

President Gary reminded our newer members who make their first \$100 contribution to a Paul Harris account that they will receive matching funds.

Quarterly Student Achievement Awards:



Ann Cash introduced our Student of the Month. **Steve Omdorf** sponsored **Michelle Mendoza**. She is a senior at Vintage High School, where she is in the Ag program. She is an equestrian member of the Napa Valley Horsemen's Association. Her career goal is to become a large animal veterinarian. Since Michelle's teacher could not attend the Rotary meeting, Shirley Clauss, ROP coordinator of the NVUSD, spoke about Michelle's all-inclusive leadership skills, her growth and commitment. She also has the ability to make everyone feel important. Michelle, in a very articulate way, thanked Rotarians for the \$200 check.

Our Speakers...

Bruce McCall introduced our speaker, **Susie Jordan**, the area director for Special Olympics.



In these difficult times, decreasing contributions has negatively impacted Special Olympics. Napa has 200 athletes with special needs. Special Olympics is a totally volunteer organization. Participants with special needs are being trained in 10 sports. Because of the financial cuts and subsequent downsizing of programs, skiing has been discontinued this year.

Special Olympic athletes practice four days a week, year round. Two Special Olympians, Twila van Damme, and Kim Price, explained that they have been involved with Special Olympics for many years and the success experience in sports has helped them deal better with their physical and mental disabilities. Swimming, bowling, bocce ball, gymnastics, soft ball, track, and field running and walking are practiced at various high schools, churches and at Synergy. Bicycle events have not been successful in Napa's traffic situation.



These two Special Olympics athletes have won many medals and they reflected on their years of competing and the positive effects they have experienced in terms of increased self-esteem.

They have learned to believe in themselves and not to be afraid. Special Olympics athletes range in age from 4 to 84 years. There are 220 athletes in Napa, plus a few in Calistoga. Transportation is a problem. A van was once donated, but the insurance was prohibitive. Therefore they now work with rented vans. Those who want to compete in the Special Olympics have to place in the top third, and after that the participants are selected via a lottery. Special Olympic teams have existed in Napa County for 36 years. The state office of SOI (Special Olympics International) is in Pleasant Hill.

