

The Napa Rotagram

March 17, 2010



Visiting Guests
 Guests of Rotarians were Mona Humpert, Bill Blanckenburg's friend, Mary Rasmussen From the Napa Rifle and Pistol club, as well as Dana's Daughter, Jennifer Jones.

Thought for the Day



An Irish Blessing

I wish you not a path devoid of clouds, nor a life on a bed of roses, not that you might never need regret, nor that you should never feel pain.

No, that is not my wish for you.

Go to:
e-water.net

Following the Pledge of Allegiance, the meeting started appropriately with an Irish blessing.

http://www.e-water.net/viewflash.php?flash=irishblessing_en

Sunshine Report: Tom Young is at Queen of the Valley Hospital being treated for a rapid heart beat.



Dale Carricker and Jim Tidgwell had winning ticket numbers but no luck afterwards. Comments were: "Isn't it time to put the Joker back in the deck?" or ...the beat goes on ...

Heads up on the **New Tech High's "La Strada dell' Arte"** or Street Art Festival. Mark your calendars! **Saturday May 15th, 11:00 AM to 5 PM.** Fabulous works of art will be for sale. The event is sponsored by the Interact Club.

Three Cheers for Whole Foods! They donated 5% of their earnings on March 10th to the Pathway

Home project. Their generosity amounted to \$2,846.

Mike Loughran reminded everyone who had signed up for the Responsible Server class on March 31 to reconfirm their attendance. There will be another class on April 9 at the Sheriff's Department.

Leadership Napa Valley is accepting applications now. For additional information, please check out leadershipnapavalley.com.

Please notify **Robert Green** if you have spittoons to use for the wine tasting booths. **Jill Barwick** is asking everyone to bring a nice bottle of wine for the Rotary tent. Please bring it soon and also let Jill know if you are available to pick up wine donations from wineries. Jill also needs more auction items, preferably not wine.

Jim Reilly, the Fine Master, has tickets for a foursome to play in a tournament at Hidden Brooke Golf Course in Vallejo. Check with your fellow Golf buddies if they can play on Monday, June 7. The proceeds will benefit CARE, an organization providing equine therapy for disabled children. Leave it to the Fine Master to make history giving a fellow Rotarian the most thoughtful gift ever received. Rotarians were truly moved when they saw the bottle of Christophe Hair Care Volumizing Mousse.



Kent Gardella showed off the latest quilt. 27 quilts have been delivered to the Pathway Home so far. They are much enjoyed by the resident veterans because they make their accommodations feel like home.



The next quilt to be crafted will feature the ... you guessed it ... Rotary wheel! Each quilt costs \$150 in materials and it takes approximately 40 hours to make one.

Today's Program

Prior to introducing **Fred Gusman**, President Bruce provided a video clip featuring Oliver North which provided the message how fortunate all Americans are to be protected by the best.



Speaker, **Fred Gusman**, talked about **Project Pathway Home**. Returnees from Iraq and Afghanistan have problems making the transition to civilian life again. For the returnees, it makes a huge difference to feel appreciated and to feel ties to the community via donations and activities planned by the Rotary Clubs.

Fred Gusman stated that the Napa Valley is a unique place in the way the people have reached out to the Veterans. The interaction between community and Veterans is a healing force. By 2011, another 100,000 veterans will return home from Iraq and Afghanistan. Other agencies can learn a lot from Pathway Home in how to smooth the path for them to compete successfully in civilian life. Two Pathway Home Residents, **Nate** and **Javier**, described their tours of duty in Iraq and Afghanistan, and they were grateful for Fred's presence in facilitating the move from a military mentality to social life.



Nate thanked Fred Gusman "for warning him and Javier that they would stand in front of Rotarians." They were happy about the bowling nights, the excursions with Rotarians (Angel Island) and the quilts making a room look like a room, not like a barrack. The heat in Iraq was brutal and it was hard, in full gear, to even open an army truck's door. The invasion of Iraq and the occupation of Afghanistan were totally different experiences. Nate and Javier described feelings of not having enough troops to make an impact. Javier expressed his experience of receiving a Traumatic Brain Injury (TBI) during combat and how the Pathway program has helped deal with the injury.

The interaction with the Afghan people was friendlier than dealing with the Iraqis where part of the population still had feelings of loyalty to the Saddam Hussein regime. When you are in combat, you are trained with a certain type of mentality. The interaction with people in the military was totally different. The Afghanistan experience showed that people there did not want Muslims and extremists running the country. It is hard to win the hearts and minds of the population when there is still drug trade going on. Yes, it is a long way from the battlefield overseas to a visit at Chucky Cheese in your neighborhood. Both, Nate and Javier agreed that it has made them stronger to realize that people are giving of their time and finances to show them that they matter, that they are important. They have overcome the feeling that Veterans are a liability in the job market, that they are viewed as gung ho cowboys. Both are about to make their mark in the job market, they see marriage and a family in the future – and themselves as reliable bread winners to support a family.

And the **Monday Night Bowling** Saga continues: One of the Veterans scored an amazing 202 and there was a report about a successful curling technique.

