

Rotary



Club of Concord

8-11-23 Concord Rotary Newsletter

By Inge Z Yarborough on Friday, August 11, 2023



Pres. Wanda gavelled the meeting to order with **Brad Prescott** citing the Pledge of Allegiance and **David Miller** intoning the 4-way test.

GUESTS:

Aside from our speaker, Concord Mayor Laura Hofmeister, we had several other guests: **Marilyn McClusky** had brought two friends, Colleen Cole and Graciela Reynoso and **Memory** had invited the recipient of our 20-21 scholarship award, Angel Mau. Moving right into



NO BIRTHDAYS OR WEDDING ANNIVERSARIES: everyone was on vacation?

CLUB ANNIVERSARIES THIS MONTH:

Luther Daniels -1 year (2022), **Nick Peterson** - 2 years (2021), **Major Gwyn Jones** - 5 years (2018), **Ron Leone** - 13 years (2012) and **Larry Sly** (whom we haven't seen for some time now) - 30years (1993).

HAPPY BUCKS: ...and there were many this week!

Rick Ernst paid \$20 for a lovely visit with **Dianne** to see son Chris at Lake Tahoe and dear friend Dennis McCormick and wife. He also announced that **Harry Bowers** has been bedridden at Shadelands Acute Care, 2765 Mitchell Dr. for 4 weeks but is in good spirits and would welcome visitors.

Nick Virgallito paid \$10 for winning a 55" TV at a Sheriff Posse's Annual BBQ! He also welcomed Graciela Reynoso whom he knew from their time at a bank years ago.

Greg Grassi, not to be outdone, offered \$5 and announced that he also knew Graciela. Is there a new Concord Rotarian in the picture?

Major Gwyn Jones generously donated \$50 for a music camp of 10 western state bands and for the 2 weddings he is to attend next week. As they will be outdoors in Roseville and Lodi with temperatures anticipated to be above 100, his enthusiasm was mixed.





Ron Leone recognized his grandson's 2nd place win, swimming backstroke in a countywide competition, and is also looking forward to his first ever trip to Alaska.

David Miller is looking forward to a big family shindig with all but one of his kids and some other friends at his home, and also recognized his 82th birthday, which was last week, with a \$50 donation.

Marcus Pierre: Last but not last, Marcus contributed \$20 to celebrate filing for a business license for a new Quantum Energy and Wellness Spa Enterprise he is starting with his wife.

Not exactly Happy Bucks, but further comments from **Major Gwyn** about the terrible fires in Maui and **Al Kappadah's** report on a wonderful event he attended at our Historical Society last Friday: the inaugural annual Concord Jazz Festival Kickoff!

REVIEW AND ANNOUNCEMENTS:

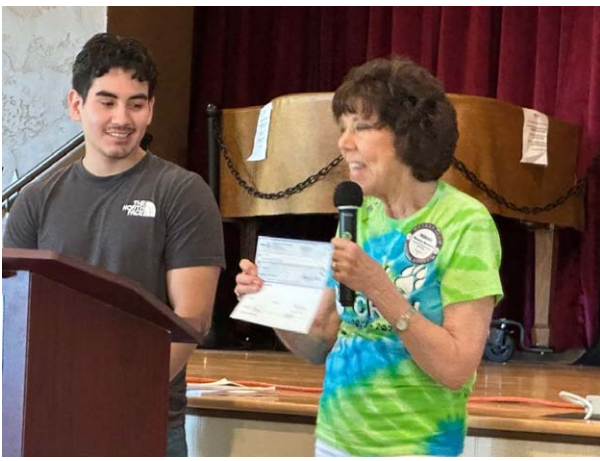
First, **President Wanda** thanked **Nick Virgallito** for bringing a whole box of COVID tests for free distribution to the last two club meetings and then expressed our appreciation for the lovely backyard concert and party **Elisabeth** and **Melissa** had invited us all to, celebrating their 31st wedding anniversary. It's really a labor of love, with **Elisabeth** busy helping guests to find parking and **Melissa** supervising the food prep and distribution, but it was well attended and certainly enjoyed by the guests.

Memory showed off photos of YV's link crew meeting, all decked out in their Rotary-sponsored colorful t-shirts. Link crew is the mentoring program that pairs seniors with incoming students to help them get settled in.

She followed up by presenting the 3rd installment of our current scholarship award to a very deserving Angel Mau, who graduated during the COVID year of 2021 with a top student award and has since been studying Computer Science and Data Science.



Stephanie Prescott reminded us of two upcoming opportunities to help with Ladybug bag assembly: Aug. 23 with the Diablo View club at the Lafayette RE/MAX office and Aug. 29 from 5:30-7:30 at the Prescott residence together with the Lafayette Rotary Club.



Other important upcoming events:

- Aug. 20: Special Olympics East Bay Regional Softball Competition - championed by Ron Melvin
- Aug. 20: Rotacare Appreciation Event - afternoon at Melissa & Elisabeth's backyard again
- Aug. 26: Cornhole Tournament, 801 James Donlon Blvd, Antioch at 9:30am \$100/2people (Delta Rotary Club)
- Aug. 31: RMB, 6-8pm at Todos Santos Plaza with music by the ladies of Zeparella - ask David Litty for info
- Sept. 8: District 5150 Baseball game, SF Giants vs Colorado Rockies - more info to come



Pres. Wanda concluded the announcements by talking about a relief fund set up by the Rotary Foundation for the victims of the Maui fires, which are still raging. *Here is a QR code that you can use to link to a donation page.*



OUR SPEAKER:

Our speaker, Laura Hofmeister, is in her 7th term as mayor – rotating annually with her vice mayor - and what a competent impression she left this scribe with! She gave a non-stop, concise overview of the City's accomplishments, challenges and major projects. Some highlights: Concord has lost about 2000 residents – in line with a California exodus to cheaper places – at the last census count.

The city is fiscally sound even though it receives only 11c of every property tax \$ and therefore relies heavily on sales tax for revenue, which is also being impacted by lower retail sales. Seriously understaffed for years they have made some strides to being almost back to where they should be while still “doing more with less”.

Special projects & state mandates: The Visit Concord initiative, championed by our own **Ron Leone**, has been a successful stimulus to business in partnership with the Chamber of Commerce.



The “white-picket-fence-project” next door has been - and still is - being held up by conflicting state policies and mandates and funding concerns, but slotted for affordable housing. Concord is still required to created 2000 more affordable dwellings, though in different

geographic areas for better distribution.

Homelessness: project analysis is in progress with hopefully an actionable plan by year-end.

A "Green Waste" state mandate, collecting for composting, is supposed to roll out by Sept.4

More stringent restrictions on the packaging, sale and marketing of tobacco products are also coming.

Retail is shrinking everywhere and some of it may be re-developed into entertainment venues or housing.

And finally: what's happening with the naval weapons station? A base review is scheduled for August 26. There are 6 developers in play plus Brookview Development, an earlier contender, but even with a plan by the end of this year, "vertical development", i.e. construction of actual buildings, is about 5-8 years out and, overall, we are looking at a 40- year timeline. Most of us will not be around for the completion of that – a sobering thought.



Our speaker followed her presentation by pulling the winning ticket and Marcus Pierre wound up with a white marble and a Starbucks card.

Next week's speaker will be Dr. Torsten Jacobson talking about "An Unlikely Hero With Global Impact".

The slide was picturing – a bat!?

