

NORTH FRESNO ROTARY



BULLETIN FOR MEETING OF 08/21/14



Rotary Club of North Fresno **Chartered October 5, 1948**
District 5230 **northfresnorotary.org** **91 Members**

Upcoming Events:

August 26th: **First Membership Mixer, 5:30 to 7:30 at Sambas at Fig Garden Village.**
August 29th: **Joint night at the Grizzly game with Figarden Rotary on Friday.**
September 18th: Field trip, new School of Pharmacy at the University of Health Sciences.

Following Weeks:

August 28th: Lynette Zelezney, Provost, Cal State University Fresno.
September 4th: Jamie White, new head coach for FSU women's Basketball.
September 11th: Bachitarr Singh with the Sikh Coalition.
September 18th: Field trip to School of Pharmacy/CA Univ. of Health Sciences.
September 25th: Mike Hamzy, Middle East issues and information.

For those responsible for the programs; Please review the above programs for accuracy and correctness of topics and presenters.

NFR Nite At The Grizzlies Baseball Game--- Friday, August 29, ballpark food (hamburgers, potato salad or baked beans, sliced melon, cookies, water, soft drinks), game ticket and fireworks after the game, all for \$25 per person. See President Ralph throw out the first pitch!! The 14th was the last day to sign up for the event but I am sure you can still go if you want to.

As members arrived at the front desk they were confronted by **JOHN KRIKORIAN**, who was masquerading as our esteemed Secretary, **DAVE REULAND**. Stationed just inside the meeting room door was **JEFF PAPE** doing double duty as greeter and dispenser of rattle tickets. The meeting was opened promptly at 12:30 by **PREZ RALPH**. **JIM SNELL**, "the Reverend", gave the invocation, followed by the Flag Salute lead by "bow-tied" **DEAN HOWARD**. Our comely **KATIE SIEMENS** performed introductions of Visiting Rotarian **Mike Firpo** and guest of **PREZ RALPH**, named Vahagn Bznouni, Vice Pres. of Customer Relations, Citizens Bank.

ANNOUNCEMENTS:

- On cue from **BERNADETTE HANSEN** Members stood and honored long-time member **FRED BIGLIONE** with a rendition of "happy birthday" on the occasion of his 88th! He was accompanied by his faithful spouse **Susan**. Delicious cake was sewed for dessert, courtesy of **BERNADETTE**.
- **KATIE SIEMENS** made an encore appearance to provide a wrap-up on the July NFR Pancake Breakfast for which she was Director. She displayed a copy of the Fig Garden Magazine, which contained photos of our fundraising event. NFR raised a total of \$21,000 (the most raised in years). Katie gave special recognition to **NEAL HOWARD**, **TOM GRAVES**, **BERNADETTE HANSEN**, **SCOTT LOWE**, **ERIC MAYU**, **HAGOP BEDOIAN** and **MARSHA WAGNER** for their assistance with the fundraiser.
- **NICK SMALDINO** reported that several members showed up for the Grape Picking session this past Sunday -

a good time and good lunch was had by all.

- **CHIP PUTNAM put in a plug for the Membership Mixer coming up next Tuesday - 5:30 to 7:30 at Samba's in Fig Garden Village.**
- Don't miss the special farewell celebration of **DORIS BLANTON'S** tenure, and contributions to NFR at next Thursday's meeting prior to her departure for Washington (not DC). Starts at 11:30.
- **PETER SCHEER** on behalf of the Endowment Committee presented a \$3,400 check to Visiting Rotarian and Founder/Executive Director Mike Firpo of First Tee Fresno. a youth skills and confidence development program centered around the game of golf.

The rattle prize, a Starbucks gift certificate, was won by none other than our in-house Chiropractor, **SERGIO BALLI**.

LUNCHEON SPEAKER - Carol Mills, 3-term Fresno Unified School District Trustee, gave a very informative presentation on the topic "The Changing Landscape at FUSD".

The first in her family to attend college, Carol completed her B.A. at UC Riverside and her jurist doctorate from UOP, McGeorge School of Law. In addition to her 10 years as FUSD Trustee she has been employed as a Lead Attorney at the State Appellate Court in Fresno the past 18 years. From her very first FUSD official Board meeting, where the State of CA Fiscal Crisis Management Team was threatening a State take-over of an almost bankrupt FUSD to a almost miraculous turn-around over time, the FUSD story has been a saga of immense challenges and extensive changes in Educational funding, requirements, codes, and accountability. FUSD, with a student population of 72,000 students, is the 4th largest school district in CA and 50th in the nation. They budget on a three year cycle. By State of CA criteria, 84% of the students come from households classified as "low income and poverty" level. Ms Mills' in-depth talk covered too wide a range of issues, problems and practices to enumerate in this bulletin. Suffice it for me to highlight some of the major topics that had to be addressed and/or implemented by FUSD over the past 10 years:

- the CA "Local Control Funding Formula"- allows greater flexibility at the local level for meeting specific needs of diverse student populations vs a "one size fits all" approach and involves some of following elements;
 - 1) Implementing a longer school day (30 min. per day) for special needs populations.
 - 2) Enhancing the kindergarten experience to meet upgraded standards mandated by the State to insure that underprivileged students can compete in first grade with schools in more affluent neighborhoods.
 - 3) "Common Core" adjustments to provide more attention to in-depth coverage of concepts to foster critical thinking and problem solving as opposed to memorization of facts.
 - 4) "Core Waiver"- according to Ms Mills, provides relief from some of the more "draconian" (in her words) penalties imposed by the "No Child Left behind" federally mandated program.

Measure Q funding (I am sorry I cannot decipher the preceding language): Graduation rates have improved in Fresno Unified schools. Measure Q funding has enabled new buildings and building improvements in several schools, including Hoover High and Fresno High.

Upcoming thorny issues to be addressed by the CA legislature and school districts revolve around: TEACHER TENURE (including Seniority) and PENSION OBLIGATIONS (i.e. continuing and rising pension costs).

Submitted by **BOB KITTREDGE**, Reporter

