

**BULLETIN FOR JULY 23, 2015**

## **NORTH FRESNO ROTARY**

### **Upcoming Meeting Events:**

**July 30: Matthew Buckman: Fresno Grand Opera**

**August 6: No speaker: Fresno Grizzlies Game and Taco Truck Takedown**

**Rotary Club of North Fresno  
Chartered: October 5, 1948  
District: 5230  
email: [northfresnorotary.org](mailto:northfresnorotary.org)  
Current Members: 98**



Be a gift to the world

**August 13: Stephanie Krause: Animals and the Law**

**August 20: Howard Watkins: Fresno County's Resident Photojournalist**

**August 27: Clovis Mayor Nathan Magsig: All About Clovis**

### **Future Club Events:**

**September 17: Fresno Stage Works @ the Fresno Art Museum**

**October 17: Charter Night @ the home of Murray Barry**

**If you are making arrangements for program, please verify the program/presenter are correct when you submit for publication.**

**RHONDA WESSELS introduced President BERNADETTE HANSEN, and the opening bell to start the meeting was rung at 12:30PM.**

**Pre-meeting functions were handled as follows:**

**Invocation: PAUL MASQUELIER**

**Flag Salute: BEA HENSLEIT**

**Raffle Ticket Basket: SY SIZEMORE**

**Visiting Rotarians/Guests: DIANE PHAKONEKHAM**  
Member SHIRIN ASSEMI introduced JOE GARCIA and presented him with the \$1000.00 Gift Certificate as the Grand Prize winner for this years Pancake Breakfast.

**DICK ELLSWORTH** updated us on the upcoming Grizzlie Game on August 6. Tickets will be \$27.00/person including dinner. That will also be the night of the Taco Truck Takedown and the team will be wearing special uniforms to commemorate the event.

**CHIP PUTNAM** about the clubs plan to increase membership for the year. He mentioned the mixers, as well as a contest to stimulate current members to bring new members into the fold

**TONY AKEL** reminded us that several members are meeting at 'Vino and Friends' every Friday at 4:30PM to wind down from the work week, take part in some friendly and spirited conversation with each other and check out the spirits. **ALL ARE WELCOME TO JOIN IN!**

**President's Notes:**

- Bernadette acknowledged those members who had perfect meeting attendance this past year
- She recognized member birthdays for July: John Leonardo, Richard Lord, Jeff Pape, Katie Siemens and Jason Weber. In the interest of political correctness, no ages were mentioned
- Bernadette also paid out to a previous raffle winner.

**HOURY SANDERSON** introduced the speaker for the day, **MICHELLE BRONSON**, Executive Director of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing Service Center (DHHSC)

The DHHSC is a non-profit founded in 1984 to educate and provide information to the community. Through state contracts it is able to provide services to our deaf population. The ultimate goal is to create a community center that can serve as a resource for all the needs of the hearing and deaf individuals in Fresno.

Michelle and her interpreter provided a lively presentation for the club.

At the conclusion of the presentation, **CHARLIE WADHAMS** was surprised with the presentation of a T-shirt from Rochester Institute of Technology. According to Charlie it is one of only two schools that provide university level education for hearing impaired students.

The meeting was adjourned at the normal 1:30PM

**TRAVELS WITH NFR:**

From June 16 to July 3, club member KEVORK OFLAZIAN visited Lebanon as a volunteer for a USAID project called Farmer to Farmer (F2F). An NGO which provided micro loans to small businesses and fishermen in South Lebanon wanted to expand their lending programs to farmers.

Enter KEVORK stage left to work with the NGO to design a couple of easy to implement products suitable for small farm lending. He spent a total of 17 days in Lebanon, 6 of which were in the rural areas of South Lebanon.

Using his tech knowledge of the Rotary International Locator when in Beirut, KEVORK identified 7 active clubs in the city. He chose to visit Beirut Cosmopolitan, which meets in the Phoenicia Intercontinental Hotel. Coincidentally, the day he visited coincided with their annual Ramadan Iftar dinner. The dinner was a massive buffet with at least 40 appetizers, salads, main courses and desserts. Ridiculous!, but delectable no less.

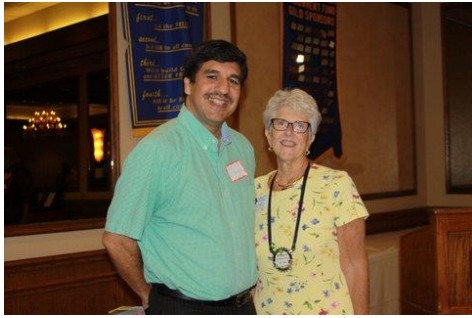
KEVORK relates that the club had 38 members, with at least 10 women. From the photos this editor viewed, it looked like KEVORK found time to share the meal with all of them.... The evening's celebration doubled as a demotion event for President, Ms. Lina Shair, to whom KEVORK presented the NFR flag. They also had 15 Rotaract club members in attendance, composed of a lively group of university students.

He says he met a wide variety of people, from government types to small farmers in the South, made many new friends, felt safe most of the time and learned a lot.

KEVORK describes Lebanon as a country of many contrasts, and is a microcosm of the entire world, where you dine in the lap of luxury in the marble and gold encrusted palace of a warlord, and the same evening have dinner within the smelling distance of cow on a small farm. The whole country is 4000 square miles, which is smaller than Fresno County.

KEVORK'S final comment was that in order to understand the country's politics, one should read or watch the Game of Thrones series.

Reporter: Jim (Sy) Sizemore  
Travel Section: Kevork Oflazian  
Visuals: Rick Quan





**If you are responsible for one of the above events, please review it for accuracy/correctness of the topic/presenters**