

ROTARY CLUB OF BIG BEAR LAKE

MEETING September 15, 2005 Best Western Chateau

Anxious to get started, we moved upstairs about 10 minutes early. Still, **President Ron Peavy's** gavel fell at precisely 7:30 P.M. bringing a hush to the crowd. **Tim Brigham** gave a moving Invocation "...thank you for us being in America ...for making us patient, not weak...keep us alert to accomplish our tasks...Amen. **Rick Baumgartner** led us in the pledge to our Nation's flag...we are still one Nation under God and so we shall remain!! **Dr. B.** then gave the medical all's clear and our Mississippi Bayou boy, old friend **Byron Koenig**, was asked to do the honors leading us in song. Since we're still one Nation under God - it was O.K. for us to sing "God Bless America" - sans the written word by **Jerry!!** We couldn't help but throw in a little R-O-T to complete the set! We all set down to another excellent Chateau dinner with background music by Glen. **Dave Leach** made the rounds for introductions. First of all, our long time friends **Carol and Byron Koenig**, visiting from their Hurricane ravaged town of Ocean Springs, MS. **Dave** thanked **Mike Larson** for doing the raffle tickets and noted several notables - **Jean, Rusty, Anne, Paul Simon. Schindler, Shindler, Schindler** - we know where you live!

Dave gave us an update on **Renee Wagner**. Even after brain surgery a week ago, **Renee** is still going to Cancun with **Dave** this weekend - go figure?.

President Ron announced the fund-raising concert to benefit Katrina survivors. The concert will feature local talent like Nancy Walker and "Catz In The Hatz", MC'd by **John, the-horn tootin' Brooklyn-boy, Grandi-man!** All proceeds will go to a Rotary-to-Rotary project to be determined by **Prez Ron**, Gov. Steele, and approved by your board. **Byron** dropped himself out of the loop. The concert will be held October 2nd at the PAC. Donation is \$50.00 per person with more opportunities at intermission.

Strike up the Oom Pa Pa - we have available, opportunities to work as costume people at Oktobefest starting this weekend. Workers are paid \$13.00 per hour donation to the Rotary Club. See **prez Ron**. We are also reminded that we need drivers the last three weeks in October to help our Interact Club deliver phone books throughout the entire valley. See **Youth Director Dick Shaw**.

There will be three Candidate Forums for November 8, local elections, the first this weekend. Most of the club is not in the jurisdiction of the CSD but what happens in the County area of our valley is vitally important to the whole. Some candidates that you should take a look at are: Jay Obernolte and Paul Johnson for the Airport Board; Bob Cartwright, Jeff Newsome and Bernardine "Bernie" Krueger for CSD Board; and Debra Sarkisian and Kenneth Turney for the School District Board.

Anne Zimmerman thanked everyone that came to the Boat Parties this summer. Some special awards were made: **Bobby Phillips** aka ss p. over side was given carpet cleaner, **Larbi** w/no boat, duct tape and twine for cabin repairs, **Rich Collier** a Hula girl for his dash, **John Grandi** a bottle of real triple sek for his **El Grandi** marguerites. It was noted that **Veryl** was o.k. but Pat really was the one we all care about and she was awarded cooking stuff. **Rich Lambert** got cleaning stuff and **Bill Jahn** a fire extinguisher. **Darrell** finally got a set of keys to Carol's boat on a floating key fob. The **Brownie's** received a years supply of Starbuck's for the use of their marina and boats. If the weather is warm enough, **Anne** says she may have a Boat Party next June!

Prez Ron called the lucky raffle ticket held by **Alan Clark**. The question had to do with the Rotary motto (a) Service above Self. or (b) It's all about me. Alan had a 50/50 chance and got it right for 66 bucks which he donated to the Katrina fund!

Darrell Mulvihill announced the fishing trip meeting including 16 Rotarians is canceled. **Prez Ron** announced new member meetings will begin with **PDG Roy Brownie** starting September 29th.

Byron Koenig was invited up to share with us some first hand experiences in the Katrina disaster. As we all know, **Byron** and Carol moved to the Gulf Coast town of Ocean Springs, *Missipissi* (as he calls it) about two years ago. Their house was spared because they are located slightly above the storm surge of 27 feet. Their daughter and son-in-law were not so lucky. Their house, on 20 foot stilts, was flooded in the garage below and five to seven feet in the first floor. Fortunately the daughter's family is able to live in **Byron's** house while he and Carol are away. Their Son-in-law, is with Shell Oil Co. and since the distruction of their

Gulf rigs, is being transferred back to Alaska. In time it would appear all the **Koenig** family may relocate. **Byron** wouldn't mind coming back to Big Bear but Carol wants something a bit warmer.

Byron said his entire Rotary District 6840, was destroyed and many members lost their houses and all their belongings, including half of his own club, about 38 members. There are no places left for clubs to meet and many businesses completely obliterated. The businesses that survived my not have customers any time soon. While some will rebuild many will leave the area. **Byron** was asked why many didn't evacuate knowing the storm was coming. He answered that there were not enough roads leaving the area and it was better to be in their home than stuck in traffic when the storm hit.

We are thankful our friends and their family are safe and were particularly happy to have them with us this evening. Bless you both and enjoy one of your passions in Big Bear - Oktobefest 2005!

Our program was presented by Dr. Robert Simonds. Bob, as he prefers to be called, served in Naval Aviation in WWII. He is a husband, father and grandfather. After the War, he became a General Contractor, a teacher, a pastor then a professor at Orange Coast College and later U.C.L.A. and now at 80 years old he is president of the National Association of Christian Educators and Citizen's of Excellence in Education.

But, before all that, in August of 1945, Bob and his crew were given sealed orders to fly over and make recognizance over the devastation caused by the Atomic bombs dropped on Hiroshima and Nagasaki, Japan then land in Tokyo Bay to await the arrival of the U.S.S. Missouri for the signing of the unconditional surrender of Japan on September 2nd, 1945. More than once, emotion caused a pause in Bob's presentation, recounting the events leading up to that day. Bob was appreciative of **Shed Conklin** and the boys flying B29s off Tinian Island clearing the way for the end of the war. Bob saw over 300,000 troops awaiting the landing on japan if surrender didn't come. Bob knows he would not have survived the War along with 100s of thousands American troops had not the Atomic Bombs been dropped. Many more Japanese would also have been killed. For the recognizance mission and waiting in Tokyo Bay all armament was stripped from his sea plane

and all weapons removed from their person - even their pocket knives. He was never so glad in his life to see the Mighty Mo steam into Tokyo Bay putting an end to 72 hours of waiting and wondering if the Japanese were really surrendering.

President Ron thanked Bob for being part of the greatest generation and presented him a Rotary golden book mark.

Eric Lewis quickly informed us that Barbara Walters and ABC News is honoring Jane Fonda as one of the top 100 women of the 20th Century. He asked us to send an email to ABC to protest this!
I certainly agree - my only hope is that these people will flatulate and end up being strangled by their own rectal sphincter!

Meeting adjourned.

Upcoming meetings:

- Sept. 22, 2005 - 5:30 Board Meeting. Regular Meeting
Program - Paramedics in Big Bear*
- Sept. 29, 2005 - Regular Meeting. Paul Harris Medals
Program - City Matters, Mayor Darrell
Mulvihill and City Mgr. Michael Perry*
- October 6, 2005 - Regular Meeting
Program - Fireworks recap*
- October 13, 2005 - Yom Kippur. Board Meeting
Regular meeting
Program - Video game design -
Jay Obernolte, FarSight.*
- October 20, 2005 - Regular Meeting
Program - Craft Talks - Paul Johnson,
Paul Penardi*
- October 27, 2005 - Spouses Night. Brief Meeting.
Halloween party*
- November 3, 2005 - Regular Meeting
Program - To Be Announced*
- November 8, 2005 - ELECTION DAY - PLEASE VOTE!*

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Respectfully submitted: **Bob McNutt**, Scribe, with the assistance of **Rich Lambert**.