



Meeting Date: December 14, 2023

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## PAST PRESIDENTS DAY

### OPENING

The meeting of December 14 was a bit more upscale than usual. Rotarians and guests were treated to prime rib and an open bar. Some members made better use of the bar than others. It was brought to us by Past President's and Team 2....mostly by Past Presidents and in particular **PP Ed Rullman** who served as MC, Santa, and comedian. In people-pleasing fashion **PP Ed** opened with the "garbage stuff": greeters were **PP Jeff Avery** and **PP Joe Ayer**; **PP Amelia Ward** teamed up with **Melinda Brown** to sell President's Fund Raiser tickets;

### TEAM: PAST PRESIDENTS



**Joe Wyse** gave the invocation; **Mike Warren** served as Seargent-at-Arms; **PP Greg Balkovek** took photos; **PP Art Smithson** introduced visitors and guests and **PP Dave Gerard** led us in the pledge..... um, **Dave? Dave?** Are you here? Well then, **PP Lou Gerard**, would you mind?



club together.

Take a moment and review the above names. Nine out of twelve are preceded by **PP**. A huge "thank-you" should go out from all Rotarians to all presidents, past and present. Their sacrifice, dedication, passion and energy is what holds this

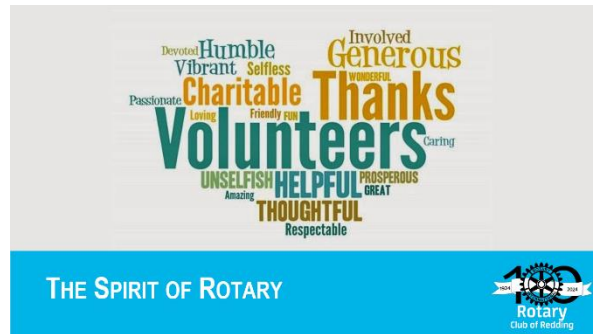
## ANNOUNCEMENTS

It is with great sadness that **Joe Wyse** announced to the club the recent passing of **PP Ray Stewart's** wife. The club offers its most heart-felt condolences.

## HISTORY MINUTE

In December of 1955...

- **The Spillway** was produced weekly, and only 1 page long
- **Honor to Youth** recognized students from Shasta High School, Enterprise High School, and Shasta College.
- Wilber Simons (Rotarian) was the "program" dressed as Santa Claus with five members of the Music Department at Shasta College helping out by singing A Capella songs like O'Come All Ye Faithful and "Silent Night".
- **Fines** were a whopping \$5!



## CRAFT TALK

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#### Tenessa Audette



In pursuit of the coveted Blue Badge, **Tenessa Audette** shared her craft talk with us today. **Tenessa** is an interesting character as she detailed in her 90mph seven-minute talk.

**Tenessa** comes from a gigantic Italian family that is rich with veterans and athletes. Indeed, her father still competes at softball at the age of 74.

**Tenessa** is an overcomer. She was raised poor. She did not get her first

bed until she was nine. Her parents became involved in the Charismatic Movement of the late seventies, and they traveled the country on a bus. At 15 her parents divorced and she racked up 9 ACE's scores in 3 years. At 17 she hopped a train to San Diego where she put herself through school, sometimes sleeping in her car to make it work.

She assured us a couple of times she has evidence to back all this up, because you should never take a politician at their word! In spite of this, the evidence is curiously missing for her show on Nickelodeon, which never got past the pilot stage.

Married with three children, she moved her family to Redding in 2013 looking for a safer place to raise their children. **Tenessa** has always aspired to government and has been involved in twelve campaigns over her ten years in Redding, including her own for City Council and her newest ambition, to join the California Assembly. **Tenessa** says she loves to argue and thus the Assembly is perfect for her. We think Rotary is a perfect place for you as well, **Tenessa**. Thanks for sharing.

## PAST PRESIDENT'S PRESENTATIONS

**PP Ed Rullman** started with a brief introduction of the role of Past President's, which is primarily to nominate the slate of Rotarians to run for office. Then **PP Ed** introduced each of 4 Past Presidents who took the stage to speak about their term in office.

### JOE AYER

**PP Joe (Arggggh!) Ayer** served from 2021-2022. **PP Joe** earned the marauding moniker when the late **Diantha Reynolds**, while introducing her team to start a meeting, repeatedly stumbled over the surname, and the soubriquet stuck.

**PP Joe's** presidency was dominated by the Covid pandemic. This bit of difficulty led to an ill-advised and now infamous survey emailed to the club. **PP Joe's** first bit of advice to future president's is to NOT start your term with a club wide survey.

Another consequential product of the **PP Joe Ayer** presidency was the conception of the Haunted House. Thanks to the brainstorming of **Randy Tate** and his fundraising committee team, the Haunted House has been an idea that scored.

A few more highlights from **PP Joe's** year were the Coffin Induction, the **PP Pat Corey** face-sign sprawl; the awkward Challenge Coin; and who could forget **Eva Jimenez'** Price-is-Right impersonation after winning the President's Card Game.

As if being president was not a big-enough bite at the apple, **PP Joe** is now serving as Assistant District Governor.



### GREG BALKOVEK



**PP Greg Balkovek** has been a Rotarian for over 50 years and served as president from 2010 – 2011. He began by sharing a letter he wrote for the Spillway as a “thank-you” to the club at the close of his highly successful term. Even more impressive was that **PP Greg** served concurrently as the Chairman of the Chamber of Commerce.

During **PP Greg's** 50-year membership Redding Rotary has developed a reputation in the district as an innovator with a strong financial foundation and a history of accomplishment. During **PP Greg's** term they initiated the Hands Program, wherein funds were used to assemble and install prosthetic hands to disabled individuals in India. Wild game dinner fundraisers were a big hit, as was the BBQ Shoot and Shoes event coordinated along with Anderson Rotary. This event featured playing horseshoes and shooting skeet along with a huge BBQ. Great fun.

The club received numerous accolades for **PP Greg's** term: special recognition and a visit from the Foundation for Polio Plus efforts; District Training held at Shasta College; **Randy Smith** awarded for Stream Team efforts; Club of the Year for District 5160, and the Presidential Citation with Distinction.

## PP ART SMITHSON



**PP Art Smithson** became a Rotarian in October of 1982. One of his favorite memories was his ping-pong ball game. **PP Art** is a huge supporter of our scholarship program, and he wanted his fundraiser to add additional funds for scholarships, which it did to the tune of \$13,000, which increased the scholarship fund by more than 50%.

**PP Art** also reminisced about the Sundial Bridge Gala Dinner. This was a district wide event initiated by our club and three others. It was a dinner and cocktails event on the Sundial Bridge in late June, and Tuxedo's with shorts were not uncommon. It was an enormous success and generated tremendous revenue for the district.

Near the end of **PP Art's** term, feeling something needed to be done to increase community awareness of Rotary, what we do and contribute, he took out a full-page ad in the Record Searchlight to educate the public. Great job **PP Art**, and thanks for serving.

## PP JEFF AVERY



The 2019 – 2020 term was a term of “firsts” for **PP Jeff Avery**. His term saw the first remote meetings and was the first with no public demotion. **PP Jeff** was the first president to start his term without a Rotary bell which was not recovered for three months. He was also the first and only Rotary Vice President as a stop gap to fill a need for another check signatory.

**PP Jeff** shared that you might have thought the pandemic outbreak and remote meetings were the lowlight of his term, but it turns out his biggest disappointment was the reception of his **PP Ed Rullman** remove the shirt game. That game was shut down early and we all lost the opportunity to spy a shirtless past president, but, thanks to Zoom meetings, Tiger Michiels fulfilled the need.

## LOU GERARD



Although **PP Lou Gerard** was not a featured speaker on Thursday, the Spillway would like to recognize **PP Lou's** significant contributions to the club. Your author will turn 60 next year and **PP Lou Gerard** has been a Rotarian for all but 5 days of my life. He served as President from 1978 – 1979 and was District Governor after that.

Next time you see **PP Lou** please take a moment to thank him for his service to the club and community.

Thanks, **PP Lou**.

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