

El Cajon Valley Lions

www.ecvlionsclub.com

July 7, 2008

39 Members and 2 Guests

Vol. 62, Issue 1

A New Year Begins . . .

A lot of things happened at the Ronald Reagan Community Center Monday - A new slate of officers took over the helm of the El Cajon Valley Lions Club - The incoming president, Gary Sims, was harassed in the usual fashion - But most important of all it was the beginning of the 62nd year of service to the El Cajon community by our Lions Club. If you note in the top right hand corner of the page you can see that this is the first issue of the 62nd Volume of the Bulletin. Aren't you impressed - you should be.

Opening

Gary Sims tried to look and sound presidential but to no avail. The members, at the prompting of some elders, ignored his attempts to get things underway - naturally there was no gavel and the bell hadn't been stolen "yet".

Songleader PP Jerry Hollingsworth finally responded to pleas and led the club in singing "God Bless America." The "Off-Keys" stunned the group with their silence and finally chimmed in on the final phrase. The offered no explanation for easing the burden on our ears.

Lion Mercy Walters asked the Almighty's blessing on the works of our club and its members. She is a fitting replacement for our beloved Rev. Mac . . . and better looking.

District Gov Visits

Our new District Governor Scott Leslie honored the club with his first official visit in his new capacity.

His calendar lists several upcoming events: July 19, District Installation; Aug. 9 Cabinet Meeting; Oct. 24-25 Council of Governors will be meeting in San Diego and local clubs will asked to help in staging the event.

He also explained the theme for the upcoming year "Miracles Through Service" and how it applies to District 4L6 Lions.

Also in attendance was Martha Schaeffer editor of the prize winning "Roaring Times." She told member the newsletter cited as the "Best District Newsletter in the World, was available in either print form or online.

Calendar

Padre Night - Aug. 1 - Tickets are \$18 with pre-game at Dick's Last Resort. See 1st VP Walt

Aug. 15 - Del Mar Races - SOLD OUT - Begins at 3:30 but get there early.

Bored Meetings - will be held this year at Hoban Management Garage the 2nd Thursday of each month.

Lions Picnic - Sept 14 at Santee Lakes

Fines and games

Exempt was purchased by 2nd VP Marlene Coyne who was quiet about the reason behind the purchase.

Birthdays this month include Treasurer Paul Tremblay and PP Tom Hoban

Other extortions by the Tail Twister included:

Lion Mike Raney, \$5; Lion Al Buki, \$20; PP Jerry Hollingsworth for a family trip to Costa Rica; PP Ray Hackworth \$10 for his experience sending kids to camp and the reaction of the parents;

Some of PP Hursts attempted to build the club's treasury fell on deaf ears - really.

What it's all about

2nd VP Marlene Coyne shared the following letter from her son, Jesse, who is serving his second tour in Iraq - read and be impressed. We were.

Hey all,

How cool is this?! It's Independence Day and I'm NOT in the office. I'm pulling guard at the Morale, Welfare and Recreation (MWR) center here in my trailer park. The air-conditioning works. I have access to the internet. I am well away from my chain of command. Already there is the smell of barbecued. . . er, um. . . animal coming from the chow hall. Life is good today.

It has been something of a rough week. I have had a couple of . . . shall we say 'interesting' projects land in my lap as people senior to me have gone on leave and left me little to nothing in the way of a handover. Today is just what the doctor ordered. I was actually scheduled to go to the firing range today. With almost zero shade and an ambient air temperature in the mid 120's here, I wasn't looking forward to it. Yesterday afternoon, at the very end of the day, I was switched out because the person who was scheduled to do this job hadn't qualified with his weapon in over a year. Sorry for him.

Here's wishing you all a very Happy Independence Day (including Dan and Nik). July 4th has always been one of my favorite holidays. It has really risen to prominence since I joined the Army. This day, as I sit here enjoying the comforts of a day of easy duty, I find myself reflecting on the American soldiers who fought to allow me to do this and I consider myself very fortunate to serve in the Army today. Think about the following:

- I travel from one place to another in an armored vehicle, all but impervious to anything smaller than artillery. The soldiers of the Continental Army walked the length of New England, totally exposed to the elements, many without even shoes.

- I have a kevlar helmet, the latest in ceramic body armor and a weapon that can fire thirty aimed shots in ten seconds. The Continentals had a blue wool coat and (if he was lucky) a wildly inaccurate French Charleville musket capable of firing three shots in a minute.

- I may not like the food or accommodations I have here, but at least I get, as the Army calls it: "three hots and a cot." When the Continentals crossed the Delaware River to attack the Hessian mercenaries at Trenton on Christmas Day, 1776, even General Washington himself was starving and exhausted.

In some ways though, the modern American army and the Continentals have a great deal in common. The Continentals fought the British Army, at the time the finest professional army on the planet, and masters of land warfare since Agincourt. Today, we fight a ruthless, fanatical enemy from a culture that has been constantly at war with itself or someone else since the beginning of recorded history. They are very good at what they do.

The real similarity with our counterparts of the Revolution is the reason we are here. Two hundred years ago we fought for the right to determine our own future. Since then, we have fought that others may have the same rights. While it is too early to tell if Iraq will be able to sustain itself as an independent nation, at least they have the opportunity. Five years ago, an Iraqi ballot read something like: [] Saddam Hussein [] Please kill my family. Today, the Kurds and the Shi'a, the two most oppressed and downtrodden sects in the country, are in control of the Presidency and the Parliament.

There are times when the Army is frustrating as hell. There are times when the stultifying bureaucracy and dogmatic inflexibility are almost too much to bear. Even so, I love this job. I am proud to be a part of something noble, something bigger than myself. Helping to bring independence to those who have never known it. . . not a bad way to celebrate the 4th of July.

So, If you see a service member, shake their hand. Thank them. Those of you who are service members, remember those who have gone before us, those who have paved the way for our endeavors. All of you, be safe. Eat a burger for me, and have a happy 4th.

Jesse