# THE DAWN

# Mercer Island Rotary Club Meeting Report for September 15, 2015

**CALL TO ORDER:** President Tom Callahan opened the meeting.

**THOUGHT OF THE WEEK:** Provided by Tom – When you are sitting around waiting for your leader to start something, no growth is happening. Rotary is participatory, not a spectator sport.

**VISITING ROTARIANS:** None that signed in.

**GUESTS OF ROTARIANS**: Were welcomed by one of our newer members, Sara Bennett. We had many visitors including Richard Charles, a lifelong Mercer Island resident and friend of Don Vollmer. Bruce Peters introduced Deb Fraizer, who manages the Community Center. Nelly Some was in attendance, and it was announced that she is expecting a new baby Rotarian soon. Phyllis William's had her friend and fellow classmate, Violet Meinzeinger present. Stuart Scarff introduced his friend and fellow attorney Bob Seidel, who thinks our club should take on the Escape from the Rock Triathlon event. Steve Fox introduced our speaker, Catherine Collins. Connie McLean introduced John Faith who is scheduled for his induction into our club next week.

**COMMITTEE FAIR:** Tom invited the club directors to come to the front of the room, and club members were encouraged to walk around to each director and ask about and sign up for different committees. The goal is to have everyone serving on at least 2 committees. We have many committees who are in need of new leadership chairs, as well as other volunteers.

**ANNOUNCEMENTS:**
Robert Goode has more of the Art Wolfe photography books for sale. These books have been donated to our district and individual clubs for fundraising purposes. Our club is selling these for $25 each, well under the retail price. Consider picking one up for yourself, or as a gift. Robert will have a table out front where you can purchase the books at future meetings, and pay with your credit card.

Tom Callahan gave a status update on Curt Nakayama's membership proposal. He began by explaining the new member proposal process:

1. Sponsoring member helps to complete the proposal form.

2. The board reviews the proposal and classification, and if there are no preliminary concerns from the board level, the new member proposal is submitted to the membership.
3. Members have mandatory 10 days to submit comments and objections on the proposed member.
4. Bylaws state that the board must consider even one member objection.
5. When an objection is received, the Board must vote in a closed session, and if 2 or more negative votes are cast by the board, the proposal is denied.

During the commentary period for Curt Nakayama, the board received 3 separate written notices from members expressing concerns, including one official objection. The objections were investigated, and then discussed at length in a closed board member session last Wednesday. Following the discussion, a vote was held whereby more than 2 negative votes were cast. Curt was informed of the result, and will not be allowed to rejoin our club at this time. He was disappointed but understood the decision.

**PROGRAM:** Steve Fox introduced Catherine Collins, the Executive Director at Sound Experience. Steve announced that he will be hosting a table at their October 3rd Banquet at the Seattle Aquarium. Please see him if you wish to attend that event.

Catherine introduced us to Sound Experience, a local organization that owns and operates the historic schooner, Adventuress, and shared with us stories of the schooner's adventures and, renewal.

In 1913 the schooner Adventuress was built in Maine, and was one of the last beautiful and majestic schooners built from that time. It was built for John Borden who had the idea of using her for a trip to the arctic to secure a Bowhead Whale specimen for the American Museum of Natural History. Roy Chapman Andrews, the man who inspired Indiana Jones, was also on board. They did not get the bowhead whale that they were seeking, but Andrews did pivotal research along the way and it lead to preservation efforts of the Pribilof Island's dwindling fur seal population.

The Adventuress was sold and sent to San Francisco in 1914 where she spent decades with the Bar Pilots patrolling the waters near the Golden Gate Bridge. By the 1950s, she had been phased out of use by the bar pilots, and found herself sitting idle at the dock in Sausalito. That could have been the end of her use, but in 1952, Dock Freeman thought he could make a buck on Adventurous up in Seattle, so he brought her here. It was an epic journey and it was amazing that she actually made it. She then went through many different owners and eventually became the youth training vessel that she is to this day. Adventuress has been lovingly restored, though there have been many challenges and times in her life that it was unsure whether she would make it. In 1963, Erni Bennett (from Mercer Island) came on board, and eventually spent a lot of her husband's money on this ship. Erni even managed to convince the Federal Government into making this a national historic landmark ship in 1989. The

Adventuress is the only such sailing vessel on the historic register that is still in regular operation and Coast Guard licensed.

They almost lost her in this past decade. The maintenance got away from them at one time, and in 2006 and 2007 they were over $100k in debt, and dealing with a huge hole on the starboard side. They have instilled a better maintenance program for the boat since then.

Catherine noted that the Adventuress has an unusual and iconic undercut stern, which boat enthusiasts might find of interest.

Ship's original bell reunited with Adventuress about 100 years after it went missing: In June of 2014, Catherine received a phone call from a gentleman in San Francisco by the name of Alfred Lemos, who said he had their ship's original brass bell. The bell had been cast in Maine and was stamped with the boats name and the year 1913. This gentleman explained that when he was 15 he lived in San Francisco, and his grandmother was dating the SF policeboat captain who patrolled the waterways during prohibition. The problem was that while his Grandmother was dating the policeman, she was married to a fireman. In return for his silence nearly 80 years ago (when he was only 10 years old) the policeboat captain gave this young man the bell from the Adventuress. During the years, this bell was used to call people in for cocktails at his lakehouse, and he was now generously choosing to return the bell to the boat.

Each year about 3000 kids from all over Puget Sound come on board for day or overnight adventures. They serve Highline school district students, a low income arew who often serve homeless teens and families. They call themselves "the last chance high school". The program is used to inspire these kids to pursue maritime careers, as well as providing a much better awareness of the Puget Sound, marine life, and the impact of microplastics and other threats to the marine environment. If you don't get kids out there, they are not going to care enough to make a difference. The goal of the program is to educate, inspire, and empower.

Catherine ended the program stating that the Adventuress doesn't belong to one, she belongs to all, and she invited everyone to come sailing with them. They charge a very reasonable $65 for an individual and $95 for a family to become members, which then allows you to sail for free all year long. What a deal!

**NEXT WEEK'S SPEAKER:** Election Candidates

**MEETING ADJOURNED**