THE DAWN

Mercer Island Rotary Club Meeting Report for January 12, 2016

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

THOUGHT OF THE WEEK: **Chuck Maylin** gave the thought for the week. He called attention to the many skills various members bring to the club and finished with some of his favorite quotes, some of which had a subtle twist. To paraphrase the last quote, "If you want to kick the person who has given you the most trouble in your life, you might not be able to sit down for a month."

VISITING ROTARIANS AND GUESTS: There were no visiting Rotarians. **Aaron Kornblum** led introduction of guests. **Sam Sullivan** introduced his son Dylan, home on break from college in New York; **Greg Asimakoupoulos** introduced Bruce Erickson, today's guest speaker, and his daughter Lauren Asimakoupoulos who has returned to live in the Pacific Northwest. She has a Master's Degree in Flute Performance and will be in concert at the Mercer Island Presbyterian Church on Friday, January 15. **Gary Plano** introduced Jerry Kavesh who is part of the citizen committee in support of the upcoming school levies.

CLASSIFICATION TALK: **Steve Devos** gave a classification talk and spoke about his love of computer programming going back to childhood days when he first tried to figure out his brother's computer. He eventually majored in software engineering and participated successfully in several competitions in high school and college. Today he works for Veritas, specializing in storing and restoring backup information for various entities. Steve holds 20 US patents. He likes "to figure things out for himself" and enjoys solving the puzzles and problems inherent in software engineering. Steve has

ANNOUNCEMENTS: There were several announcements.

Donna Buckingham announced the Mercer Island Youth and Family Services "Giving from the Heart" fundraising breakfast on February 10. See Donna for signup; we hope to have some Rotary tables at the event.

Robert Goode announced that **Eva Agrawal** will be heading this year's Polio Plus dinners and urged members to consider hosting at dinner, which he said is not hard, or coming to one, which is fun.

Curt Greenberg gave a report on dictionaries handed out to third grade students at Van Asselt Elementary today. Each student said, "Thank you," as they received one, and Curt thanked the Board for the funds to purchase them.

David Helsby gave an update on the annual fund drive. 90% of the members have contributed thus far and we are within $9,000 of the $72,000 goal.

We were reminded that the ***Half Marathon*** is coming up and to sign up for a committee if we have not already done so.

Bruce McAuley announced the Rotary First Harvest "Heart and Wine" dinner and cocktail hour February 12. Well-known Chef Thierry Rautureau will be in charge. The evening will officially start at 6:00, but those who are there an hour early will have an opportunity to meet and talk to the chef. Contact Bruce for location and signup.

Jerry Kavesh, guest of **Gary Plano**, spoke about the school levies on the upcoming February 9 special election. Two levies will be on the ballot. One is a six-year Capital Projects and Technology Levy to fund building and facilities repairs and maintenance and the district's technology program, the latter of which receives no state dollars. The other is a one-year levy to replace aging school buses. Kavesh emphasized that both are renewal levies to replace previous levies expiring this year.

FAMILY OF ROTARY: **President Tom Callahan** relayed a report from **Pat Turner** on her ex-husband's health status.

Bruce Peters reported that **Fred Reebs,** who lives in Newport Shores, needs rides to the meetings. He urged that any members coming from that direction consider picking up Fred on their way.

Bruce Peters also mentioned that **Brian Comstock** is reluctant to come back to Rotary until he is totally recovered from his illness and able to participate fully again. Bruce suggested that we call him and let him know that just his presence alone is welcome, and full participation can come later.

PROGRAM: Bruce Erickson, Executive Director of Covenant Shores, spoke on "Reversing the Effects of Dementia".

A program developed by Dr. Ryata Kawashana called SAIDO Learning has been implemented at Covenant Shores. In fact, Covenant Shores is the first location to have the program in the Pacific Northwest. The results from the first year have been very positive.

The program developed by Dr. Kawashana is a non-pharmaceutical treatment that improves symptoms of memory loss due to dementia. He noted that whereas dementia prevents the pre-frontal cortex of the brain from being exercised, deliberate and regular exercise both mental and physical can restore function.

Functioning of the pre-frontal cortex facilitates among other things: thinking, control of actions and emotions, communication, decision making, and self-motivation. Success through the program has helped those with dementia to be more mindful of others, initiate and participate meaningfully in conversation, recall visits from family, engage in more activities, use more appropriate speech and be more relaxed at the same time they are more alert. It helps them "become the person others once knew".

The program involves "reading, writing and 'rithmatic." Everything is done OUT LOAD. Simply reading and counting numbers aloud activates the pre-frontal cortex. Moreover,

“simple” is the operative word. THE EASIER THE BETTER. There is no benefit to trying to do more complex math. The value is in reading and counting the numbers.

To implement SAIDO Learning at Covenant Shores, a staff support person meets with two patients at a time for 30 minute sessions five times a week. Each patient is given a preliminary cognitive test and tested again every six months. On a scale of 1-30, the average person without dementia will score at or around 30. For dementia patients without any specialized support to help reverse the trend, the arc depicting cognitive ability slopes steadily downward. At Covenant Shores, the first patients scored an average of 18.10 at the start of the program, after six months, they showed a drop to 16.63, but after a year, they rallied and actually improved to 18.18. Had there been no support program for them, they would have been expected to fall to 10 on the established charts tracking such decline.

Covenant Shores’ staff gives of their work time to implement the program. The charge for participation is $200/month.

NEXT WEEK’S SPEAKER: Next week’s topic will be on heroin addiction and its treatment.

MEETING ADJOURNED

SCRIBE: Phyllis Williams