

March 13, 2014

This Week

It's going to be a Surprise ... The Second week of planned *Speaker Surprises* for the Month of March

Program Host: David Smith

This is the second week in a mysterious succession of programs for March. Our program host is keeping his planned speakers to himself. He insists there is a method to his madness, but only time will tell. It is possible that he will tell you if you ask him, as long as you promise to keep it a secret from everyone else.

Meanwhile invite guests, telling them that you know our program host, and he has never failed to provide an interesting and informative program, but he wishes to keep the theme of his month a secret.

As this is being written for the first week in March, we are experiencing our first *REAL* rain storm of this rainy season. It could be the beginning of another *March Miracle*. The same might be said about the programs that have been planned. As with the weather, we must wait and see. ☺



Dollar & Sense
by President
Dennis Mehriinger

Ski Afghanistan?

For those of you who haven't booked your spring break ski trip this year, why not consider Bamian, Afghanistan? It will be a Ski Break without crowds (or rebels) and pristine powder on all sides. A new private airline — East Horizon — has recently announced non-stop service from Kabul to Bamian, so you will be able to avoid checkpoints and rebel raids on your way up to 9,000 feet. The hotels even allow you to bring your own AK-47.

While the famous standing Buddhas are gone, even the carved niches in the rock cliffs are worth the trip. One niche is 115 feet high and the other is 174 feet. Their history is equally impressive as they took over 20 years to build and stood as the largest shrine to Buddhism in the world until the Taliban blew them up in 2001.

Nearby caves include some of the oldest oil paintings in the world. Afghanistan's oldest National Park with the Band-e-mir

lakes is also nearby and welcomes summer campers from the Western world.

On a recent February day the skiers numbered 300 percent of last years turn out. Last year they had one and this year it was up to three.

The two current operating hotels the Noorband Qala and the Highland offer 30 rooms for visitors. However, two more resort hotels will open in the coming year bringing the capacity to 300.

Imagine skiing on fresh powder and only sharing it with 30 to 300 people.

What a difference compared to Vail, Colorado which has as many as 10,000

skiers in one day. ☺



Greeters

March 13

Hal Yorke

March 20

Mike Zoeller

March 27

Susan Applegate

Program Review



That's what our speaker, Gail Casburn, does for a living. The first of Dave Smith's surprise speakers, Casburn is very familiar to those Altadena Rotarians who attend committee meetings at her establishment, the Altadena Ale House on North Fair Oaks Avenue. She got into the food service business early in the 1980s when she worked in the deli at Cal State LA, and then into their catering department. Pretty

Running Ye Olde Pub

soon, she was working at restaurants in Pasadena. In 1990, she and her husband purchased Lucky Baldwin's on South Raymond and converted it from a deli to an English pub. They sold it when they had young children and it wasn't the most desirable environment in which to raise them.

Kids do grow up, however, and four years ago, they purchased the Altadena Ale House. They turned a Mexican Cantina into an English pub, and got off to a blazing start because it was World Cup time. They wanted to create a place where people could come to actually socialize while having a beer or a glass of wine. She used the strategy of gradually upgrading the quality of the beer served to get rid of an undesirable clientele, and it worked.

The Ale House operates under a Type 42 license, which covers the serving of beer and wine, but does not require the serving of food. The Ale House does, how-



ever, serve a limited menu. Casburn is also looking at the possibility of purchasing a Type 48 licensed facility, which can serve all types of alcohol. The Ale House was the lead in redeveloping the North Fair Oaks Avenue area. They received redevelopment funding from Michael Antonovich's office to perform the complete transformation of the front fascia of the pub. Young people are buying homes there because of the redeveloped neighborhood.

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Rotary Club of Altadena - #7183

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Meets: Thursday, 12:10p

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Jacque Foreman Sparks/Website

Mike Zoeller Club Projects

Craig Cox Community

John Frykenberg International

Tom McCurry Youth Contests/Awards

Mike Zoeller Youth Projects

Ray Carlson Vocational

Steve Cunningham Membership

Editor, Design & Typesetting Foreman Graphics

Photography Jacque Foreman

March

Literacy Month

Program Chair, David Smith

March 13 - It's a Surprise

March 20 - It's a Surprise

March 27 - It's a Surprise

April

Magazine Month

Program Chair, Gordon Seyffert

April 03 - To be Announced

April 10 - Andreas Hessing, Scrub Jay Studios (landscaping with native plants)

April 17 - Judy Alder, Pasadena Family History Center (compiling & preserving family history)

April 24 - Lori Webster, Webster's Fine Stationers ("transitioning" a small business)

Congratulations



Birthdays



03/14 - Emily Aiken (Linda Wilkes)

03/15 - David Smith

03/15 - Trish Robinson

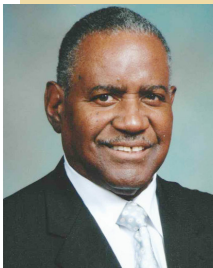


Anniversaries



03/01 - Tom & Etta McCurry

3/30 - Dennis Miller & Noriko Suzuki



In Vietnam, the Navy revived a brown-water force using converted pleasure boats and old World War II landing craft patrol boats (PBR). The primary boats in the river patrol force were shallow-draft fiberglass boats, driven by jacuzzi water jet pumps derived from watercraft built for the civilian market. The Navy equipped PBRs with radar, machine guns and grenade launchers and used them to patrol the rivers of the Mekong Delta and the Run Sat Special Zone among others.

Chasing the enemy in these boats powered by jacuzzi pumps is how the US Navy

Program

Continued from p.2

Casburn is a bundle of energy. She teaches full-time and runs the pub. Her breaks come in the summer when she's off from school and the now-grown kids run the pub. And, she was extremely supportive of our club's participation in the Summer Concert Series at Farnsworth Park. She suggested some upscale beers and provided us with kegs and the ability to get a Jockey Box to help serve it. As a result, we had our best year ever.

We're looking forward to working with her again this summer, and especially to those wonderful committee meetings with that great pizza and some wonderful beer. Let's hoist another round! Ed Jasnow



Just Plain Swift

adapted to Vietnam. While it definitely had carrier, battleship and logistics operations in hand, the Navy wasn't prepared for the coastal and inland waterway operations in Vietnam. All the focus at that time was "How do we defeat the Soviet Navy?" The Navy relied on converted pleasure boats and old World War II landing craft for combat that more often than not took place on rivers and narrow inland canals than at sea.

The Vietnam Era was also marked by the creation of the US Navy Seals and the long running battle to keep the 45-mile long *Forest Of Assassins* shipping channel from Saigon to the open sea. US ships provided gunfire support to ground troops. All the while, thousands of Seabees built airfields and fortifications throughout Vietnam, and approximately 50 Seabees were killed in action.

The Navy also brought in the Coast Guard, patrol ships and smaller boats to stop the arms smugglers. North Vietnamese trawlers usually came at night; staying in international waters then making a dash to smuggle arms up the river when

they thought it was clear. Navy destroyers tracked them on radar from afar and alerted the swift boats which intercepted the North Vietnamese boats.

The *Brown-Water Forces* (PBR boats) were so effective that the North Vietnamese were forced to find other ways to arm their insurgency. The Navy did not have a vessel for charging up the rivers and inland channels that fed the Mekong Delta. They again turned to the consumer market by buying shallow-draft, leisure boats powered by jacuzzi pumps. These were fast and highly maneuverable but lacked armor because the weight slowed the boats too much. These smaller boats were fairly vulnerable, but they made up for it with firepower — machine guns, mortars and grenade launchers.

Vietnam was unpopular and, therefore, people did not want to know much about it. Ret. Lt. Cmdr. Thomas J. Cutler, author of "Brown Water, Black Berets" who served in Vietnam in 1972 wrote "that the war did not exist or get much attention in Hollywood until America saw it on the big screen."



> > **NEXT BOARD MEETING** < <

TUESDAY, April 01, AT 6:15p
260 S. Los Robles, Pasadena
3rd Floor Conference Room



MONEY by Linda Wilkes MATTERS

Economic Update In The News

New home sales rose 9.6 percent in January to a seasonally adjusted annual rate of 468,000 units, the highest level since July 2008. December's initial reading of 414,000 units was revised to 427,000 units. On a year-over-year basis, new home sales were 2.2 percent higher than January 2013. At the current sales pace, there is a 4.7-month supply of new homes on the market.

The Mortgage Bankers Association said its seasonally adjusted composite index of mortgage applications for the week ending February 21 fell 8.5 percent from the previous week. Purchase volume fell 4 percent. Refinancing applications decreased 11 percent.

Pending home sales, a forward-looking indicator based on signed contracts, rose 0.1 percent in January. On a year-over-year basis, January pending home sales were down 9 percent.

The Standard & Poor's/Case-Shiller 20-city housing price index — on a non-seasonally adjusted basis — fell 0.1 percent in December after a 0.1 percent decrease in November. On a year-over-year basis, prices rose 13.4 percent when compared with December 2012.

The consumer confidence index fell to 78.1 in February from a revised 79.4 in January. The index was benchmarked at 100 in 1985, a year chosen because it was neither a peak nor a trough in consumer confidence.

Orders for durable goods — items expected to last three or more years —

decreased \$2.2 billion, or 1 percent, to \$225 billion in January. This follows a revised 5.3 percent decrease in December. Excluding volatile transportation-related goods, January orders posted a monthly increase of 1.1 percent.

The Commerce Department announced that gross domestic product — the total output of goods and services produced in the US — increased at a revised annual rate of 2.4 percent in the fourth quarter of 2013. The initial report was 3.2 percent.

Initial claims for unemployment benefits for the week ending February 22 rose by 14,000 to 348,000. Continuing claims for the week ending February 15 rose by 8,000 to 2.964 million. The less volatile four-week average of claims for unemployment benefits was 338,250.

Upcoming on the economic calendar are reports on construction spending on March 3, factory orders on March 6 and international trade on March 7.

Home Line Go Solar

A new rooftop solar installation is completed every four minutes and rooftop solar systems now account for two-thirds of solar installations in the US.

Two reasons account for this exponential growth in the use of residential solar energy. First, the cost of solar energy has fallen precipitously, about half the price it was in 2008 and over 100 times lower than it was in 1977. The cost of generating a watt of solar power in 1977 was \$76.67. The cost of a watt of solar power in 2013 was \$0.74.

Second, as the price has dropped the savings have dramatically increased. Today, the average US solar homeowner will save about \$20,000 over 20 years by going solar. In three of the four most populous states in the country, that 20-year total savings is above \$30,000 (California: \$34,260, Florida: \$33,284, and New York: \$31,166). And in Hawaii, the savings incurred by going solar over a 20-year period is \$64,769.

Two ways roof-top solar systems are sold include outright ownership, where the homeowner pays for the solar panels and the installation, and solar leasing, where you pay a low, fixed monthly amount to install the solar panels and use the electricity they generate. Of course the downside to leasing is that you won't receive any applicable credits or rebates. Those will go to the party leasing you the solar equipment.

Credits and rebates vary, but Federal, state and local solar rebates can save up to 50 percent off the cost of your solar system.

All those savings aside, a low-cost way to finance the installation of a residential solar system is with a renovation loan. They're available for purchase and refinancing and provide substantial savings because they let homeowners avoid using more expensive consumer credit.

If you would like more information about how a renovation loan could help you soak up the many benefits of a solar system, please call me today. ☎

Find Linda Wilkes on line: <http://www.myprospectmortgage.com/lwilkes>

District Assembly
for the
2014-2015 Rotary Year

Saturday, April 5, 2014
Sign-in - 8a <> Event - 9a

Victor Valley College

18422 Bear Valley Road
Victorville, CA 92395

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ON LINE