



The Desertarian

**Newsletter of the
Rotary Club of Palm Springs, California**

ROTARY CLUB OF PALM SPRINGS

August 3, 2011

After bangin' da bell, President **Mike Sellin** opened the meeting by asking **Nancy Palmer** to lead us in the Pledge of Allegiance to our flag. **Jacque Wachs** counted to "four" without using her fingers or toes, as she led us in the 4-Way Test of the things we Rotarians think, say and do. PDG **Mile Levinson** introduced visiting Rotarians PDG **Cy Breen** from the Sunup club, and **Ron Sellin** from the Cathedral City club. Visitors this week included Liz Glass, Sharon Apfelbaum, and Scott White.

Announcements this week included:

- Enjoy Fun in the Sun and a Night with a Cool Flick at **KNOTT'S SOAK CITY-PALM SPRING** - 1500 S. Gene Autry Trail, Palm Springs - August 20, 2011; 2 pm to 10 pm. Attire is beachware, and the cost is a mere \$34.00 per person. EVERYONE is welcome for this afternoon and evening of fun, fun, and more fun.
- **Janie Bolitho** is doing an incredible job re-designing our club web site, and integrating it with our weekly *Desertarian*. Speaking of the *Desertarian*, editor **Mike Brill** thanked **Frank Peabody, Tracey Powers, Jamie Canfield, and Bob Elsner** for volunteering to share the *Desertarian* duties.
- **Christine Cross**, this year's Rotary Foundation Chair, called on **Milt Levinson** to present multi-Paul Harris pins to **Judy Bronstein**, Christine and - *in absentia*, husband **Stuart Cross**.
- Birthday greetings were given to **Mike Sellin** and **Mike Brill**

Tim Ellis introduced today's guest speaker, developer John Wessman, who was accompanied by his son-in-law, Michael Braun.

John Wessman provided a comprehensive review of the current plans for the redevelopment of the long-defunct Desert Fashion Plaza. The plan highlights a mixed-use facility, with residential, restaurants, a bowling alley, a very high-tech 14-screen cinema, and ample FREE parking. Up to three architects will be used in the design, which should result in a mix of mid-century, contemporary, and Spanish design.

Part of this plan will require supplemental funding through the levy of a 1% sales tax, a controversial item that will be placed on this November's ballot to be voted on by Palm Springs residents. This tax is strongly supported by the Palm Springs Chamber of Commerce, Main Street, and many other business groups. It will have a 25-year sunset provision, and should raise \$32 million to be used toward the project itself, and an additional \$11 million to be used by the city for infrastructure improvements and other needed city upgrade projects.

Mr. Wessman fielded several questions regarding the project, and the general hope is that it will go forward to finally get rid of the "white elephant" empty center that has been standing vacant for so many years.

Sheriff **Bob Elsner** used his half-vast knowledge of downtown Palm Springs to quiz and fine **Tim Ellis, Christine Cross, Jim Griffes, Mike Sellin, JJ Bronstein, Nancy Palmer, Jim Dunn, Tim Ellis (again!), Thomas Smith, Mike Brill, and Bill Lentz.** And thanks to **Bob Allan** for his usual table-hopping to arm-twist the fines out of the reluctant members.

After all of that fining, there was only one person left standing who was "happy" - **Judy Bronstein** gave some happy dollars.

Frank Peabody won this week's "marble game", but alas, the black marble eluded his grasp.

Be sure to attend the August 10 meeting, where we'll be entertained by local radio travel show hostess Francoise Rhodes.

Editor: **Mike Brill**