

RACQUET CLUB ESTATES NEIGHBORHOOD ORGANIZATION

Monthly Meeting Minutes for March 12, 2011.

Recorded by Your Faithful Reporter, Ron Oliver.

On a flawless Palm Springs Saturday, beneath sunny skies in the backyard of Board of Advisors member (and Your Reporter) RON OLIVER and his Long-Suffering-Boyfriend ERIC BOWES, the March meeting for the RCENO was called to order at 10:10 am by RCENO President RICK VILA.

Gathering around the glamorous "martini pool", adjacent to Mr. Oliver's newly installed outdoor wet bar, BOA members SCOTT KENNEDY, BARBARA MACCARILLO, DONNA CHABAN-DELMAS, JOSEPH MAY, ROBERT PERRY, LAUREN SCARBRO, BOB MERLIS and DEAN NICASTRO were joined by other interested neighbors and RCENO members including TERRY TOWNE, KEN LYON, MARTY KAPFF, DENNIS VASQUEZ and STEVE YOUNG.

Crawford T. Manchester provided security.

Delightful canapes and freshly baked treats, courtesy of the aforementioned Long Suffering Etc., were enjoyed by all, and the "pop" of the champagne poured into orange juice to make the morning Mimosas certainly added to the gaiety of the meeting as the success of the recent 2011 RCE Home Tour was toasted.

The business portion of the meeting commenced with a report from Treasurer Dean NiCastro who announced that the

Home Tour, including ticket, t-shirt, and miscellaneous sales, grossed \$15,865.53 (FIFTEEN THOUSAND EIGHT HUNDRED SIXTY FIVE DOLLARS and FIFTY THREE CENTS) which, after related expenses of \$4,415.00 (FOUR THOUSAND, FOUR HUNDRED AND FIFTEEN DOLLARS) has left the RCENO with a bank balance of \$22,356.33 (TWENTY TWO THOUSAND, THREE HUNDRED AND FIFTY SIX DOLLARS and THIRTY THREE CENTS).

All smiled with approval and delight; the Racquet Club Estates Neighborhood Organization is doing rather well, we think.

Discussion ensued regarding tax filings and government paperwork and so forth. (*Your Reporter finds this sort of thing beyond tedious and generally tunes out during these conversations, but suffice it to say somebody is going to hire somebody to do the taxes for the past three years and submit them to somebody in some IRS office someplace, apparently in time for the May meeting. WE shall see...*)

Dean also reported on his experiences as "Principal for A Day" at Vista Del Monte Elementary School. Shadowing Principal Joseph Scudder for the day was, according to Dean, quite an eye opening occasion and he told us a few tales "out of school" as it were, regarding the challenges the teaching staff faces at our local school. We once again applaud the teachers and principal for the Herculean task they take on every morning when the bell rings.

Your Reporter had previously sent out "minutes" from the February 2011 RCENO Monthly Meeting to all interested

parties via electronic mail or "e-mail" as is the popular parlance; these minutes were unanimously approved. The January 2011 minutes were not available, but were to be approved at the April 2011 meeting.

Donna Chaban-Delmas reported on the Palm Springs Neighborhood Involvement Committee's monthly meeting, with topics including:

- the crime subcommittee for PSNIC (details to come);
- a new traffic signal is to be installed at the Sunrise and Ramon area, which will hopefully prevent anymore homeless persons from being knocked over like bowling pins as they dart from the park to the shopping center in the middle of the night;
- Palm Springs is still recruiting for a new Police Chief after the last one stepped down to "spend time with his family" (read: avoid any further scandals on his watch); current acting chief is Al Franz who will remain in place until a new one is found.
- The number for Shopping Cart Retrieval (i.e. to call when some nitwit has left a grocery cart in the middle of the street or on the sidewalk, cluttering up the neighborhood) is: 800-252-4613. From all reports, they are quite prompt in showing up to get these annoying eyesores out of the way.
- the new "Smart Water Controllers", which normally

cost \$181.00, are free if one attends a 90 minute workshop being put on by the DWA. Installation must be done by a licensed electrician, but the money saved is considerable. Check www.DWA.org for more details.

- The "Books Vs. Badges" Basketball game, a charity event in aid of the local high school, will be held April 16, 2011. Rick Vila authorized buying \$100.00 worth of tickets for this event, and gifting them to our local elementary school, the aforementioned Vista Del Monte, on behalf of the RCENO.

- April 21, 2011 will see the ground breaking ceremony at Demuth Park for the new Palm Springs Community Vegetable Garden, with a plot available to anyone in the city who belongs to a neighborhood organization. *(While Your Reporter applauds this, he certainly has no intention of digging around in the dirt when there is a perfectly good grocery store not ten blocks away from his home. He will however pass the information on to his houseboy Panton, who is currently overseas fighting for freedom in Libya. Or someplace like that.)*

- A town hall meeting regarding the proposed Whitewater Jail project will be held Sat. March 26, 2011 at the Camelot Theaters in Palm Springs. 9:30 am. (As of this writing, the proposed jail has been put on indefinite "hold".)

With Donna's report concluding, conversation ensued regarding streamlining the communications department of

our RCENO; Your Reporter concurred that a great deal of non-essential information was being spewed out through the community e-mail system, and agreed to begin editing as He sees fit. Your Reporter and Rick Vila formed a subcommittee to look into the creation of a monthly "Newsletter" to take place of infrequent emailings.

Lauren Scarbro made a motion to support the May 7th, 2011 PSNIC City wide Picnic by buying a booth at the event in the name of the RCENO. The motion passed unanimously. Discussion ensued as to what exactly to do with this booth, and all agreed it would be a very good event.

The meeting then moved onto the biggest topic of the day, the "debriefing" around the 2011 RCE Home Tour.

All agreed the event was a massive success, with 400 guests moving through 7 homes, the third sell-out in as many years, and Rick thanked all for their tireless efforts.

Members made recommendations for next year's event, including:

- Dennis Vasquez suggested chairs be provided at the front door of each home to help people slip into the "booties" worn inside.

- Lauren felt the "Check In" desk should be situated inside the general purpose room of Vista Del Monte School and this be publicized well in advance of the event to

avoid confusion.

- Donna suggested clarifying the "cut off time" for check in at the homes; perhaps a "Last Entry 12:45 pm" sign.

- Bob suggested that homes contracted to be on the tour have a stipulation in their agreement that they can't cancel at the last minute, barring emergencies.

- Steve Young suggested a "guest" clipboard at each home for visitors to leave email addresses and questions for the homeowner;

- Barb suggested that the homeowners have some sort of "information" guide regarding their contractors, where they purchased furniture, history of the home etc. as well as having the homeowners brief the Docents at their residence with some background information as well.

- it was also agreed that "feedback cards" be distributed to attendees next year.

- the leftover brochures will be kept to show to potential Home Tour participants next year.

- it was also agreed to look into obtaining RCENO-branded items for next year; water bottles and umbrellas with an RCENO logo, both for sale at the check in desk.

Donna made a motion to spend a maximum of \$400.00 on an order of the RCENO t-shirts, which sold briskly during the

Home Tour. These t-shirts will be available for sale at the PSNIC picnic and online through the RCENO website.

Moving on to the future, with the May 14, 2011 GENERAL MEETING looming ahead, Rick asked those present to think about the election of new BOA members and whether or not those currently occupying positions on the Board wish to continue in those same roles. *(One can sense a coup in the air, and Your Reporter feels certain that the political upheaval sure to result will make the situation in Egypt look like a Bible Study Class!)*

Barbara brought up the issue of how to use the money raised by our Home Tour, and various other events, in the community's best interest.

A suggestion was made to perhaps create a "scholarship" at the local elementary or high school level.

Another suggestion was put forth regarding placing a "monument" at the entry to the RCE Neighborhood, similar to one currently gracing the "Sunmor" neighborhood near the airport. Rick suggested this was rather complicated, given that the monument would need to be on private property. Scott Kennedy and Marty Kapff agreed to form a subcommittee to investigate the situation.

Steve Young and Barbara MacCarillo agreed to form a subcommittee to look into creating a grant to help local neighbors improve the "curb appeal" of their homes. They

will research this and report back at a future meeting.

With our RCENO events requiring all sorts of items for ease of facilitation, Lauren Scarbro graciously offered her garage as a storage space. The sound system, banners, tables, and other such effluvia will find safe harbor there, under Lauren's watchful gaze. WE should all be so lucky.

Rick Vila mentioned that he had created a list of RCENO members and their addresses at the request of The City. Your Reporter had been vehemently opposed to this until it was explained to him, under sedation, that it was to be used for fundraising, rather like a census, and not for any sort of sinister purpose. This satisfied Your Reporter somewhat, moreso when Rick assured Him that the private email addresses and phone numbers had been removed from the list, as well as street numbers.

(Your Reporter has a thing about lists of people. It reminds him of the Hollywood Blacklist of the 1950's...it took YEARS for his career to recover from that!)

Speaking of lists, Robert Perry will be doing a personal "thank you" outreach to the Home Tour Attendees, via email, and asking for their feedback on the event. We look forward to hearing the results of this at a future meeting.

In other news, the Palermo residences - once considered for membership in our RCENO - are apparently forming their

own Neighborhood Organization. We applaud their decision and support their effort!

And finally - a sobering note - one of our founding members, Mr. Scott Kennedy, reported that he has recently been diagnosed with Stage 3 lung cancer and is responding well to his chemo-therapy. Mr. Kennedy is a much loved member of our organization and we at the RCENO wish him a speedy recovery.

With that, our meeting came to a close and we all gathered around Mr. Kennedy to offer him our support and best wishes.

(...which, if Your Reporter knows Mr. Kennedy, is EXACTLY what he had planned all along...he's SUCH a drama queen!)