



LODI ROTARY



SERVICE Above Self

# STRIPPINGS

MARCH 23, 2006

ROTARY YEAR  
2005-2006

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## WELCOME MICHELE LAVERTY

Michele Laverty, Director of Ag Science Center in Modesto is here to tell us what we have been dying to know about Ag Science in general and the Center in Modesto specifically. It should be a really interesting program. Things are a bit different than they were when your great grandfather operated his farm from sunup to sundown using horses and steam engines to power the equipment with which to plant and harvest his crops...in fact the only people who were over a hundred years ahead of their time were the moonshiners who produced ethanol. Their products predated the need for fuel for internal combustion engines and saw to an oversupply of fuel for internal confusion engines...so people could get drunk and luckily enough the horse was the designated driver.

So much technical advancement has happened on the farm, most of it in the past 50 years, that it spawned a whole new bureaucracy that has taken it upon itself to undermine every advance ag science has made from genetic engineering to chemical warfare on destructive insects. Not in an effort stop anything, they just needed a reason to insist on expensive permits, kind of like the building permit industry.

Would that such a bureaucracy would descend on Peru and Columbia, South America. They could figure a way to ruin the cocaine industry in a matter of weeks.

Sorry. I have a tendency to rant like that, we liberals are thusly afflicted.

Last week, an explanation was tendered at the meeting but I didn't understand it entirely because it was supposed to be about Measure K, i.e.: schools, but we ended up hearing about highways and other infra-structural elements.

Next week... the program is still in the preplanning stage.

If things continue as they have since the most recent Rotary election, Jerry Evans will be wearing a tuxedo to run the meetings. He has a nicer shirt on every week. Jerry will be a great president, he loves Rotary and the people in it so we can expect a most successful year.

In the meantime, Sally has been sending the Friday Facts sheet from the District Guv, a missive we should be reading assiduously and acting on in ways that make sense to us. The most important thing I learned from the last one is the fact the rooms at the Dist Convention are going up to over \$220 a night on the 27<sup>th</sup>, so act now.

If you have never been to a District Convention, take the time and go, you will be glad you did.

In some ways, Rotary Conventions are like old-fashioned church conferences, the people there have basically the same message ...Service above Self ... when it's told in an interesting way reiteration can be refreshing.

The big difference is you can go to a Rotary meeting and not feel guilty. Seemed all our religious meetings made me feel like a true sinner. Hmm, I'll bet if I had stopped sinning I wouldn't have felt that way. When I was a boy as a member of the Evangelical Church, it didn't take much imagination to be a sinner because there was only one test: Is it fun?

My grandfather Bader was so tough about things like that if he caught someone smiling, even when that person was shoveling dirt, he'd make 'em stop and have them do something he was sure wouldn't engender a grin. You had to do your smiling on you own time.

Seems the City Council has another can of worms to deal with. There are people who want "In God We Trust" emblazoned on public building walls. I personally don't remember a time when something like that would have been a really big issue. I don't think it is a conflict between church and state, those two have never stood in each others' way. My minister told me (years ago) when you do business with another church member, or for that matter, the minister himself, bring a lawyer. I don't know about you, but I have never felt the need to change my religion because I walked past a Crèche or read a bumper strip or listened to a TV preacher.

People kill one another over religion these days and I am quite certain that is precisely what Jesus and Mohammad wanted them to do. Not!!