



JUNE

2011

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SONOMA COUNTY FORUM

June 2, 2011

The Life of a Restaurant Critic with Restaurant Reviewer Jeff Cox



Restaurant Reviewer for the
Press Democrat Jeff Cox

Do restaurant owners and chefs shudder when Jeff Cox walks through their doors? No, because it is likely they don't know that he's there. Cox has been the restaurant reviewer for the Press Democrat since 1993. He admits that he uses phony names to make reservations, never tells anyone he is visiting a particular restaurant and goes out of his way to be anonymous. "I grade service not only on how staff treats me, but how staff treats others in the room," he says. "I consider myself a journalist first and a restaurant critic second—which keeps me honest." His forays into the restaurant world have sharpened and refined his palate. His "beat" covers restaurants in Sonoma, Napa and Mendocino counties, but he occasionally travels to San Francisco when he hears about an exceptional restaurant. A prolific writer, he has written 17 books on wine, food & gardening, his 2007 book "The Organic Cook's Bible," was nominated for a James Beard Foundation award. It contains 250 recipes, 200 color photos and entries on nearly every vegetable, fruit, herb, milk, cheese, meat, oil and other foodstuffs found in the U.S. He has been called a "veritable walking encyclopedia of all things food and wine!" Come to the Forum on June 2 and bring a friend--you will never look at restaurants the same way again!!



Sonoma County's Fair: It's 75 Years Young An insider's view with Jane Engdahl Thursday, June 16, 2011

Jane Engdahl has been working for the Sonoma County Fair for more than 30 years. What began as a summer job during college has morphed to a more than full time job as the fair's Special Events Coordinator. It is Jane who hires almost all the entertainment, plans contests and other hand-on activities, develops the schedule, produces in-house graphics and publications and trains more than 600 fairtime employees. This year, she is coordinating activities for the Fair's 75th Anniversary Celebration. She is producing a written history and a Fair museum, among other things. (Continued on page 2)

BOOK GROUP NEWS

BOOK GROUP I will meet at Vicki Groninga's home Monday, June 6th at 7PM to discuss "Emma" by Jane Austen.

BOOK GROUP II will meet at Celeste Connor's home on Tuesday, June 14th at 7 PM to discuss "Garlic & Sapphires" by Ruth Reichl.

BOOK GROUP III will meet at Donna Spilman's home on Monday, June 27th at 7 PM to discuss "Little Bee." by Chris Cleave.

FUTURE SPEAKERS & OFF SITE ADVENTURES	
June 22	Off-site Tour—The Buck Institute
July 13	Off-site evening—Artstart program At the Arthouse

Sonoma County's Fair: It's 75 Years Young (Continued)

Thinking about going to the fair this year? Jane says, "You can expect a look back at the past, as well as some fun stuff you've never seen before! Join us at the June 16 meeting and get an insider's look at the Sonoma County Fair!"

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

There is an abundance of energy at our meetings with everyone reconnecting with friends or greeting new members. Do you wish there was more time to get to know other members? Your opportunity to spend additional time with other Forum members is available on July 13th at the Art Start event. (See the Art Start article for additional information.) Take this occasion to socialize in a casual setting, enjoy some appetizers and learn about another aspect of our community.

Roseanna Woods is unable to continue writing the member bio's for the newsletter for the remainder of the year. I am looking for a volunteer to write these bio's. This is not a board position so no monthly meetings are required. Roseanna has indicated she enjoys volunteering because it affords her the opportunity to speak with new members. If you are interested, I will be happy to discuss this volunteer position.

Pat Edelstein Quail6@sbcglobal.net

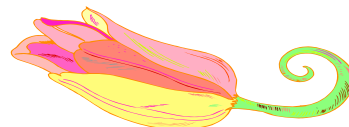
Breakfast Costs Are Due



July is fast approaching, and it's time to pay our mid-year breakfast costs for July through December 2011. The amount due July 1st is \$148.50 which is \$13.50 times 11 meetings. We only have one meeting in the month of September, so we will have 11 meetings instead of the usual 12.

You may pay "at the door" at our June 2nd or June 16th meetings, or mail your check to Sonoma County Forum, PO Box 6142, Santa Rosa, CA 95406.

If you have any questions, please contact Susan Sudduth at 528-8893 or ssud-duth@sonic.net.



MEETINGS ARE THE 1ST & 3RD THURSDAY @ 7:30 AM @ THE FLAMINGO RESORT

BIO's

Lan Tran's BIO



Lan Tran comes to the Forum through her connection to the Santa Rosa Gardening Club, where she met Julie Sooley. Julie had toured Lan's lovely garden and asked Lan if she would like to come to one of our meetings. Lan's love of gardening has created a haven for her with many flowers and vegetables to tend. She and her husband, Ken, have been married for 23 years. They have no children. A major focus in Lan's life over the last 20 plus years has been her volunteering with a Vietnamese/American non profit organization. Her husband Ken, was first approached through the Rotarians in 1985, to come and translate for the medical staff at a clinic in Vietnam. This clinic does free surgeries for cleft lips/palates for children who otherwise couldn't afford the care. After the first trip, Ken decided that the work of volunteering wasn't a fit for him, but Lan was touched deeply. At the clinic she wears many hats, from intake of the patient to helping in the surgery procedure. She travels twice a year to support the staff and works a straight 10 day shift. In addition to helping the children who need the cleft palate surgery, she also helps another organization that does hip and knee replacements. Travel and most expenses are paid by the volunteer but the organization does pay for the hotel expense. Welcome Lan to the Forum.

Terry Stark's BIO



Terry Stark has been a community volunteer for over 40 years. She's worked in a variety of capacities - from being a board member with CASA, United Way, the Shelter Network and Hillsborough School Board. Here in Sonoma County, where she's lived for the last 10 years, she's limited her involvement to CASA and a newly elected secretary of the Symphony League. She has 2 children and 4 grandchildren - with the two families spread across the coasts - Portland, Maine and Northeastern California. She belongs to two book groups. One, in San Mateo, is a couple's group with 4 couples who have been meeting for over 30 years! Her other group is a local one. As luck would have it, at this time, both groups are reading the same book! "Cutting For Stone". Besides reading as a past time, Terry loves to cook. She and her husband gather every few months with a group of 5 couples and they share cooking for each other. I'll bet she has quite a file of recipes! Soon, Terry and her husband will be taking a cruise along the Black Sea and visiting various cities, including Istanbul. Welcome Terry to the Forum.



July Social: An Evening at Artstart



Please mark your calendar to join Forum members at our upcoming social event, "An Evening at Artstart" Wednesday, July 13, 5:30-7:30 p.m. at the program's Arthouse, 716 Bennett Valley Road. Artstart's summer apprenticeship program will end July 15, good timing for us to meet several of the young artists and view a sampling of their work. Through public and private partnerships, Artstart provides paid apprenticeship training for young people ages 15-21 to create art for public places and private collections.

Please come enjoy a lovely evening of wine, hors d'oeuvres and friendship! Sign up at the next Forum breakfast or send an email to donnaspilman@wildblue.net.