

BULLETIN



ROTARY
CLUB OF SAN JOSE

Meeting: November 7, 2007 Number 4677

2007-2008 President, Julie Matsushima



Mimi Blais **"Ragtime Piano"**

"Ragtime is FREEDOM! ... Ragtime music helped me to discover my own freedom as an artist!"

For **Mimi Blais**, ragtime music became a way to discover her many talents as an entertainer, story-teller, communicator, educator, director, actress and composer.

Classically trained (started piano at age 7, then entered the Quebec City Conservatory of Music, L.Mus, B.Mus in performance & a Concert Diploma at McGill University in Montreal, where she now lives).

Whatever the style of music she chooses to play, she receives unanimous praise from the public and the media; in Canada, in the United States and in Europe. This gifted pianist, generous to a fault, causes laughter and tears. Her music speaks to the audience, caresses, tickles, charms, dazzles, and surprises....it touches the soul.

Mimi loves the theatrical. She often uses costumes to present or invent characters, making her piano concerts more visual and animated. Sometimes, when she steps out on stage, the audience may not even be sure that it's actually her. **Mimi** is one of the most popular ragtime performers on the circuit. She is also the comedy star of the "genre"....*Music to be seen!*

Nicknamed the New Queen of Ragtime, at her first visit to the Scott Joplin Festival in June 1990, by musicologist and historian Ed. Berlin, **Mimi Blais** is in high demand because of her charming personality, her deep musicality and her flawless and precise technique at the piano. **Mimi** received several other nicknames; the Celine Dion of the Keyboard, The Female Victor Borge and the Quebec **Liberacette**...

A concert artist, **Mimi** is touring a lot in the United States and Canada, playing, explaining and showing people why ragtime is so important in the history of American Music: *Ragtime is the trunk of the tree.*

Mimi just re-visited Hungary in May 2007. In May 2006, she completed a successful concert tour and was invited to return in August to play at the famous Sziget Festival (in Budapest) and a week after she played at the Oslo, Norway Jazz festival as a *special guest* with the Ophelia Ragtime Orchestra.

In 2005-2006, **Mimi** received a grant from the Canada Council for the Arts to do research on Canadian ragtime; a music folio and CDs will come from this research.

Mimi Blais has many musical talents...come and hear The *Queen* of "Right" Time!

FIRESIDES REDUX OCTOBER 20-28, 2007

A sincere thank you to all those who hosted or attended a Fireside last week. We had 9 hosted sites with a total of 105 participants - 65 Rotarians (22 were members who joined within the last two years) and 40 Spouses and Guests. Based on the popularity of spreading out Firesides over the course of a week, we have scheduled the next events for the week starting Sunday, April 13th.

We received many excellent reports on individual Firesides, but Ken McDonald, a new member who co-hosted an event, took grand prize. With his permission, here are his unedited comments:

Shelly McNamara, Julie's Fireside Champion

An amazing night!

Toni and Dale: you were great hosts - and your house and yard are perfect! Everything was superb. Folks arrived (many were late, but it didn't matter...Toni and I had our Pinot Noir and the sunset was spectacular!), we stood and sat around the outdoor fireplace - enjoying wine, beer, and munchies (...excellent barbecued sausage!)...and talking. In fact, throughout the entire evening, the conversations never faltered.

In my mind, this event was exactly what a Fireside is meant to be. New members talking with long-time members. Folks getting to know folks. I didn't know Warren Hegg. We talked...a lot. Turns out Warren went through high school with my grad school roommate. I didn't know Jim Bower. Turns out he was a Stanford Daily photographer who took photos of my freshman football team.

After dinner, while enjoying a slice of deliciously decadent chocolate cake (that Toni slaved for hours to make...not!), strawberries and whipped cream, and coffee - we sat around the family room sharing stories of Rotary. At first, we shared experiences. Later we engaged in a most compelling conversation about the future of San Jose Rotary. I know that Paul Huber and Warren Hegg's brains are both still working overtime on outtakes from that discussion! Wow! Ken

Participants

Dale & Toni Wise (member since 1990)

Nicki & Paul Huber (new member)

Evelyn & Dave Heagerty (member since 1973, Past President, Past District Governor)

Terry & Ken McDonald (new member)

Warren Hegg (new member)

Jim Bower (member since 2000)

Rotary Week

Nov 6	ELC	7:30	Air Systems
	Don Goldeen	12:00	Gordon House
Nov 7	Membership Devel	7:30	Coakley-Heagerty
	Rotary Meeting REUNION LUNCH	12:00	Summit Center
Nov 8	Gordon House Committee	12:00	Gordon House

SAVE THE DATE

**The Rotary Club of San Jose's
Annual FUNdraiser
Summit Center
Saturday, March 1, 2008**

Tickets go on sale Wednesday, November 14
This event is always a sell-out, so plan now to attend this important and thoroughly enjoyable evening. Hear all about this year's theme at our November 7 luncheon!