Today We Have A Joint Meeting With The San Bruno Club
The Speaker Is Todd McIntyre With CalTrain “The Closure of Certain CalTrain Stations”
The lady that spoke to us this day is certainly the most courageous person ever to appear at one of our club functions. Her name is Shari Bookstaff.

At times, following this horrible ordeal, she considered giving up, and nobody could have blamed her for that. But as they say these days, she had an Epiphany, and was determined to improve. She had to learn to breathe, walk and, of all things learn to blink.

But this is not why she spoke to us now. Her purpose in life is to inject in all of us a positive attitude toward life and its normal travails. To do this she has written a small booklet about her life and how she lives it. It is entitled “When Life Throws You Lemons. Make Cranberry Juice.”

Even though Lemons are a very valuable fruit, we have become used to calling things that don’t work right as lemons. This writer once came upon a new car with lemons pasted all over it to illustrate what a problem it was. She says you have to take what lemons life gives you. To live with these lemons, you have to add a little sugar. Since her favorite drink is cranberry juice the mixture of lemons with the cranberry makes the concoction palatable. This pretty much sums up her approach to life.

There is no doubt that she has applied these principles to her life and it is an inspiration to all of us.

Speaker Shari Bookstaff (right) with her assistant.

A remarkable lady!

GALLERY OF PAST PRESIDENTS

In August 1910, Rotarians gathered in Chicago for their first national convention. The existing 16 clubs unified as the National Association of Rotary Clubs and elected Rotary founder Paul P. Harris as the organization’s first president. Harris served two terms – the only president to do so.

Other notable presidents include Canadian E. Leslie Pidgeon (1917-18), the first from outside the United States; Sydney W. Pascali (1931-32), the first from Great Britain; and Maurice Duperrey (1937-38), the first from continental Europe. In July 1940, the first president from South America, Armando de Arruda Pereira, took office.

The presidents of Rotary International are elected for one-year terms and must have served as a club president, district governor, and member of the RI Board of Directors. In addition to leadership experience, RI presidents bring a commitment to service above self as well as the culture and pride of their home club and region.

The practice of introducing an annual RI theme began in 1949-50.

JAPANESE ROTARIANS WITNESS DEVASTATION

“The earth seemed to be shaking forever, and it was so strong,” says RI Director Masahiro Kuroda. “I thought I was going to die.”

Kuroda, a physician, was seeing a patient on the second floor of his medical clinic in Hachinohe, Aomori, Japan, when a 9.0-magnitude earthquake off the country’s northeast coast struck on 11 March.

“I hurried her downstairs. Holding each other’s arms tightly, we walked down very slowly. After we reached the bottom floor, the earthquake stopped, says Kuroda. “I led all the other patients outside and told them to go home, but she said she was too scared to leave and wanted to stay in the clinic. I didn’t know what to say – she was so frightened. She left a couple of hours later and Dr. Kuroda was finally arrived home.”

The quake, the largest to hit Japan in recorded history, triggered a tsunami that swept 6 miles inland, destroying entire villages.

Kuroda and several staff members stayed at the clinic overnight after hearing on the radio that the waves had come close to the building. Kuroda’s home and clinic were spared, but just a couple of miles east of the tsunami and quake had caused major destruction.

“All I was trying to do was to prepare for the night and get heat,” he says. “It was very cold. I tried to find some oil and batteries for the stove and candles. The electricity went out, so it was dark and hard for everyone to walk around. There were constant aftershocks, really strong ones. We all were very scared.”

Kuroda says he couldn’t reach fellow Rotarians at first.

“Landline phones, cell phones, and e-mail were down for three days. We were completely isolated,” he says. “In the hardest-hit areas of District 2520 [Iwate and Miyagi], we don’t know all the details of the damage. There are still Rotarians we haven’t been able to contact yet.”

Naoki Narayama, governor of District 2520, visited Kuroda’s home and clinic to offer encouragement.

“It’s encouraging that the response of Rotarians is driving to deliver supplies to the areas most in need,” he says. “We, all, as Rotarians, are working together. We are deeply moved by what I’m seeing Rotarians do.”