

THE SPOKE
May 6, 2008

SPOKE EDITOR: Pat McGuire
Contact Pat at 667-0663 or at pmcguire@turlock.k12.ca.us if you have
announcements and/or information to share in the Spoke.

DETECTIVE FOR THE MONTH OF MAY: Kent Johnson
(All members are encouraged to share information with the Detective.)

CALENDAR – UPCOMING PROGRAMS

May 13, 2008 Teacher Recognition Day

May 20, 2008 Carla Castro, Crime Stoppers, Modesto Police Department

June 3, 2008 Doug Marks, 2008 Iditarod

THIS WEEK Gabriella Frank, Composer in Residence, Modesto Symphony

LAST WEEK Susan Brauner from Blue Diamond on Agricultural Exports

Susan Brauner has been with Blue Diamond for 30 years. She works in the Governmental Relations and Corporate Communications areas.

Susan shared that Blue Diamond will celebrate its centennial in 2010. The company began as a co-op organized by 230 almond growers. 60% of the growers own Blue Diamond. Sixty years ago, 80% of the world's almonds came from Spain and Italy. Today, 80% of the crop is in California. 100% of the almonds are grown in the western hemisphere. Almonds are successfully grown in California because of our climate—Almonds need 58 degrees in February to pollinate the trees.

Blue Diamond exports 70% of its crop. 80% of Blue Diamond is focused in the industrial bulk area with almonds as ingredients.

Susan shared that 20% of the business tripled in the last five years. The familiar “smokehouse” almond was their flagship and started in the 60s with its connection to American Airlines. Today, Blue Diamond features bold flavors with wasabi and

smokehouse jalapeño almonds. Another new line is the dry roasted variety with sea salt, cinnamon and vanilla flavorings.

With respect to the export market, Spain is Blue Diamond's #1 buyer at \$120 million. Europe has \$1 billion. France is within the top ten. Japan has \$100 million and China has \$50-60 million.

Blue Diamond's trade policy is "Free Access to Almonds Worldwide." Susan talked about the World Trade Organization and bilateral level agreements. Blue Diamond is currently selling to 95 countries around the world.

Susan also talked about the problems Blue Diamond is experiencing with the Trade Promotion Authority. She said trade agreements allow economies to grow. They create good economical political partners. Agreements open new businesses for commerce and help countries embrace tolerance. Susan stressed that globalization needs to be embraced. The Columbia Free Trade Agreement has become a political opportunity instead of an economical one. She said the Speaker of the House is holding it for political reasons...and this has caused problems for the industry.

Susan concluded by stating "Trade is good for America. It is being held hostage for political reasons. Trade is good for Turlock. It is good for you and for me..."

ANNOUNCEMENTS

ROTARY FOUNDATION

Thank you to John Arellano for his \$100.00 contribution to his Paul Harris.

MAY BIRTHDAYS

Please join us in wishing the following Rotarians a Happy Birthday:

May 1	Walt Gray
May 4	Debi Shrum
May 13	Bill Gibson
May 16	Sharon Silva
May 17	Luisa Nelle
May 27	Ron Hillberg

If you have a birthday in MAY, please deposit \$10 with John Vercammen.

