

# Redwood Empire Coin Club

Volume 70, Issue 10, Meeting #815. October 10, 2018

Next Meeting: November 14, 2018

## REMEMBERING LEE

Lee Gong, RECC Life Member #7, passed away unexpectedly on September 21, 2018. We all lost a friend, colleague, mentor, and more. He was the Vice President of the RECC for, like, forever. He was one of the top error coin collectors in the country and loved to share his knowledge about that with all of us, as well as helping Young Numismatists with collecting in general. Lee loved to play and coach baseball, as well as trying to attend Major League games in as many ballparks as possible. He served in the Navy in the Naval Photographic Center Washington DC and Harbor Clearance Unit Two, Norfolk, VA. And he was very involved in the family business of G&G Markets in Santa Rosa and Petaluma.

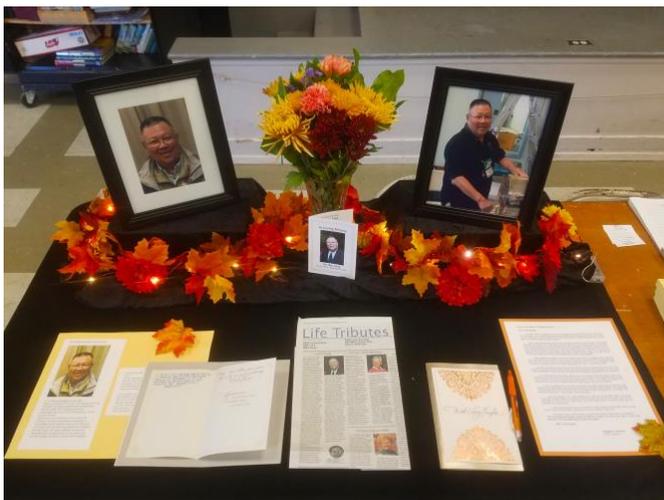
Lee was well loved in the community. This was quite evident with the large gathering for a memorial service on October 6 at the Friedman Center in Santa Rosa. Display cases there were filled with photos of Lee's life. His extended family was there as well. Many of us were able to extend our condolences to his wife, and we listened as his son Devon and several others (including Merle) talked about their memories. And after that service, we were all treated to Lee's favorite snacks.

The October meeting of the RECC was our own memorial to Lee. Flowers and photos were on the front table, and the packed room listened as we all recalled memories of Lee. The following are from a taped transcription, so some speakers could not be identified.

1. Mike C worked for his uncle, who owned United Markets in Marin. He visited various other stores to get ideas for his uncle. He met Lee at G&G Market, hung out with him in his office, and appreciates that Lee was always cordial to everyone. He also found a Kennedy half dollar with a rotated die, which Lee was happy to buy off him to use as an educational piece.
2. Guy S said that everybody probably had a story about Lee. Lee joined the RECC over 27 years ago, a few years after Guy joined. Guy brought in an old Chinese example of 'knife money'. RECC member Ozzie Stout, an expert in Chinese coins, was present and said the piece was a reproduction ~ 100 years old. So, Guy showed it to Lee and asked him to read the Chinese inscription. Lee replied (probably with a smile) "Why are you asking me? I'm an American!". [A number of us made the assumption that Lee spoke and read Chinese, because I have heard him say that, laughing, to others]



3. Mike M told a story of how Lee helped him set up the food kitchen for the coin show, after Willie died about 8 years ago. Lee would bring in all the pastries, donuts, bagels, spreads, etc. for the show. Mike mentioned how his dad used to bring home steamed pork buns from Chinatown when he was a kid. So, Lee surprised him with fresh-made steamed pork buns at the beginning of all the shows (until G&G Market was sold). That was the kind of friendship he showed to everybody. Mike also mentioned to Lee how he had trouble sleeping prior to a show day. And Lee said, "I just close my eyes at night and think about all the coins I want and need". Sure enough, it worked for Mike!
4. "I did not know Lee at all. But he was always smiling and was a very good person"
5. Jim C joined the club because of Lee and his knowledge of error coins and currency. Lee served as a mentor and was a good friend. Even when Jim moved to Sacramento he still came to meetings to see Lee and be with the club. He learned a lot from Lee and will miss him extremely.
6. Julie M used to come to meetings with her dad and sibs when she was a little kid [she has been to college since!]. She remembers Lee running the Junior meeting, as well as an auction just for kids during our annual Christmas meetings. Lee was always kind and helpful, a memory she will always cherish.
7. From Merle: Lee was one of his best buds. For over 26 years they never had an argument or disagreement. They did a lot together- things they loved to do- and Merle will miss him tremendously. Several people asked Merle to repeat the speech he gave at Lee's memorial, but it was all ad lib. But he tried. In May 1992 Merle went to the 490<sup>th</sup> meeting of the club- there were 5 people there and no coins. "But we do talk about them" he was told. Ten months later, at Jack Beymer's shop, Merle was told he should go to the club's 500<sup>th</sup> meeting. Reluctantly he did go and was greeted by Lee "good to see you again". There was a cake, enough for 100 people—and there were six members present (and still no coins). The president was stepping down after that meeting, and Merle was talked into staying on as president (as long as he could change things, like bringing coins to the meeting!). Look where we are now. Merle also told the story of how he, Lee, and Joe M got a personal tour inside the San Francisco Mint, led by a former employee (as a retirement gift for working there 40 years). It was an incredible tour, and Lee was excited to be there, particularly seeing an entire bin with errors and rejects.
8. This was the hardest newsletter for me (Charlie) to write. Lee was a friend and colleague, always willing to share stories. He loved to go hunting in Mexico, loved to display his collection competitively at ANA conventions, loved to talk baseball- and food in Chinatown- and coins- and more. Most important was his passion for his family and friends, which rubbed off on so many of us. I am grateful to have been a small part of that.



## THNAKSGIVING DINNER

We *WILL* have a **Thanksgiving Turkey Dinner** at the **November** meeting!!! There will be turkey, gravy, mashed potatoes, stuffing, and beverages. **Please bring a side dish or dessert to share** with the club and make this a great meeting.

Because of rising costs, dinner will be \$8 for those who bring a dish to share and \$10 for those who do not.



## WESTS TOKEN SHOW

For the first time, the Western States Token Society ("WESTS") will have its annual Token Jamboree here in Santa Rosa! Save the dates: March 22-24, 2019. If you have any interest in tokens, or if you want to find out about tokens—you will want to attend this show. It is the biggest tokens show this side of the Mississippi. Some of the biggest collectors/dealers are already lined up, in what should be a really great show.

## DRAWING WINNERS

Membership: Tiffany S, Bill V, Roger N, Larry C, Connie P, Jack H

50:50 pot of \$140 was split with Jim C

Raffle: Andy O, Joel M (twice), (?), Erica G (thrice), Jack H, Joe, (?), Mike, Glen M

Gold Coin raffle: (it was done, did not catch the name of the winner)

October Attendance: 79

New Members: none

Guests: yes

Auction: it was donation night!

Adjournment was at 9:00 p.m. sharp!

## KIDS CORNER

There *will* be a Junior Meeting at 6 PM in November.

Volunteers for **refreshments** for November are all of you who can bring a salad/side dish or dessert to go with the Thanksgiving Dinner-THANKS!

The Redwood Empire Coin Club meets on the second Wednesday of each month. The Club's meeting location is the **Veterans Memorial Building, 1351 Maple Avenue, Santa Rosa** (opposite the County Fairgrounds across from Highway 12), in the "**Dinner Room**" on the east side of the building, at 7:00 p.m. sharp.

R.E.C.C.  
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## **UPCOMING SHOWS & EVENTS**

**November 9-10, 2018. NorCal South Bay Sunnyvale Coin Show.** Domain Hotel, 1085 East El Camino Real, Sunnyvale

**November 30-December 1, 2018. San Francisco International Coin Show.** Holiday Inn Golden Gateway, 1500 Van Ness, San Francisco

**February 15-16, 2019. Redwood Empire Coin Club's 51<sup>st</sup> Annual Coin Show.**  
E. L. Finley Hall, Sonoma County Fairgrounds, Santa Rosa

**February 17, 2019. Cupertino Coin Club's 47<sup>th</sup> Annual Coin Show.** St. Joseph's Church Hall, 10110 N. De Anza Blvd, Cupertino

**March 22-24, 2019. WESTS (Western States Token Society) Annual Token Jamboree.** "Lodge Room", Veterans Memorial Building, 1351 Maple Avenue, Santa Rosa

**April 28, 2019. Vallejo Numismatic Society 47<sup>th</sup> Annual Show.** Florence Douglas Senior Center, 333 Amador, Vallejo

**July 27-28, 2019. Fremont Coin Club 46<sup>th</sup> Annual Show.** Elk's Hall, 38991 Farwell Drive, Fremont

Check out our newsletter at: **[Redwoodempirecoinclub.com](http://Redwoodempirecoinclub.com)**

Thanks for reading. Corrections? Additions? Questions? E-mail us at:  
[newsletter@Redwoodempirecoinclub.com](mailto:newsletter@Redwoodempirecoinclub.com). See you September 12— Charlie