

2002.5

Pg. 1

Sonoma West Times & News

February 7, 2002

Rotary dedicates Laguna-side bench to memory of Billy Barty

by Corey Young
Sonoma West Staff Writer

SEBASTOPOL — A small group gathered near the Laguna de Santa Rosa on Friday to remember Billy Barty, the actor and entertainer who often appeared at Sebastopol Rotary Club functions.

Barty died in December 2000 at age 76, after appearing in dozens of films and television shows since the 1930s. A person of small stature, he founded the Little People of America in 1957 and the Billy Barty Foundation in 1975.

Last year, the Rotary Club of Sebastopol installed a bench near the seasonal bridge over the Laguna in memory of Barty. The bench features a plaque bearing Barty's name and is near to the ground for little people.

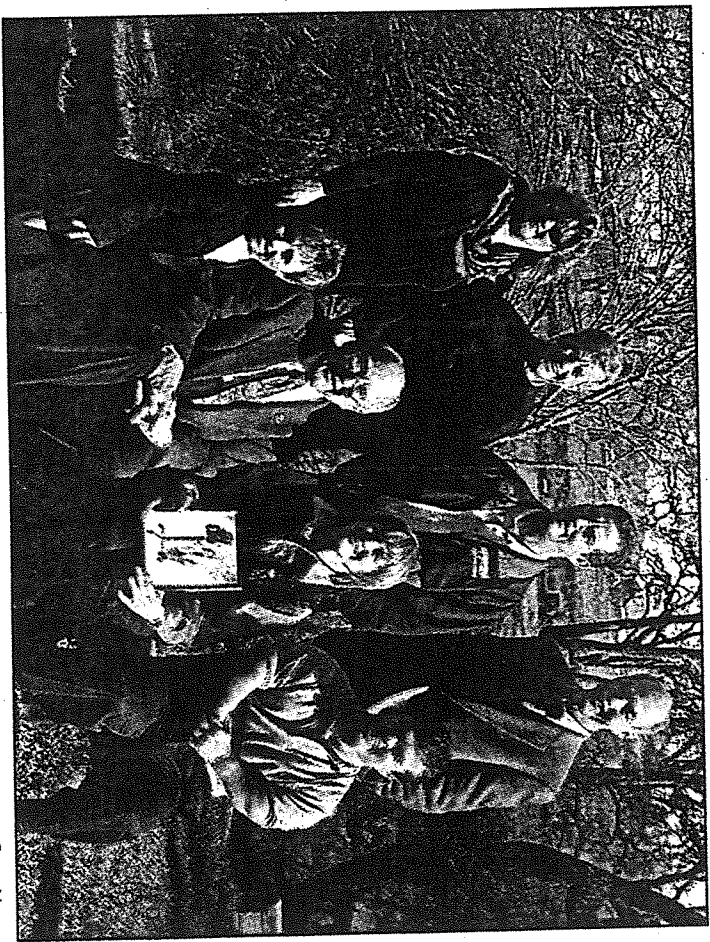
"When Billy died in 2000, the club decided to have a bench dedicated in his memory," said Tracy Kelso, the Rotary Club's past president. The plaque's inscription reads, "In memory of actor, entertainer, Bill Barty, who loved Sebastopol and its people. Donated by Rotary Club of Sebastopol, 6/1/2001."

Rotarians who attended the informal dedication last week recalled their memories of Barty.

"Billy used to come to our club all the time," said Brad Benedetti. "He was an advocate not just for little people — that was one of his big ones — but for all barrier awareness, for all disabilities."

Tom Farrell said Barty enjoyed visiting Sebastopol.

(Please see *Bench* page A2)



BENCH MARK — Tracy Kelso, Howard Waterman, Brad Benedetti, Russell Cunningham, (front row) Margarita Farrell, Tom Farrell, Geni Jewell and Doug Farrell at the Laguna-side bench dedicated to late actor Billy Barty by the The Rotary Club of Sebastopol. Barty often made appearances at club functions.

Corey Young

Sonoma West Times
Feb 7 2002

5,2002

• Service
• SUV's
• Trucks

Tune-Ups
• Clutch Repair
• Air • Brake Service



Clinic
Suite 202
30am - 5pm
DISCOUNT AT TIME OF PURCHASE!

PRESIDENTS' WEEKEND FEBRUARY 15-18 CONTINUOUS FAMILY ENTERTAINMENT including ---

CARNIVAL HYPNOTIST ARTS & CRAFTS CITRUS EXHIBITS CHEF'S DEMOS PUPPETS & MORE IS DAY, 62 & OVER \$1. V & QUEEN PAGEANT ADE AT NOON DALE CABERET TASTING

ARD'S COASTERS AT 2 AND 5 PM -- AIR ADMISSION TASTING DAY 12 & UNDER FREE RITED CARNIVAL RIDES COMMISSION \$5. \$3. UNDER 6 FREE! L 707.894.3992

2002.5 Pg. 2

Bench... (Continued from front page)

"He loved this area and the people," said Farrell.

Coaches Corner

New Classes!

- Group Glasses
- Free Weights
- State of the art equipment
- Personal Training
- Massage
- Chiropractic & more



IT'S NEVER TOO LATE!

Bring in this ad for a FREE One Week Trial Membership

Local Residence Only Offer expires 2/28/02
420 Morris St. Sebastopol 829-5180

Now accepting Sonoma Express

pany. "When I graduated in Brandt, Lindsay and Jack

"He said that it's a very tolerant population."

"As the founder of our organization, he left us with a great legacy that we proudly represent," said Margarita Farrell, a member of Little People of America.

Also attending was actress and comedian Geri Jewell, who addressed the Rotary Club of Sebastopol earlier Friday at the noon



BOX OFFICE VIDEO
6960 McKinley St.
Sebastopol 823-9798

Voted Best in Sonoma County

- May We recommend:
- Don't Say A Word
 - O
 - Hardball
 - Advertising Rules
 - So Close to Paradise
 - Bojangles

Where Movie Lovers find the Best

Over 14,000 Catalog Videos

Foreign (1100)	Western (190)
Comedy (1050)	Military (185)
Drama (1650)	Music Videos (260)
Action (550)	Classics (850)
Children (1460)	Documentary (420)
Family (160)	Bizarre (160)

www.myvideostore.com/boxoffice

ing Engineers Union Local 3.

hardest thing is about having cerebral palsy and being a woman?" she asked. "It's plucking my eyebrows. That's how I originally got pierced ears."

Jewell said people often ask her why someone with cerebral palsy would want to become a comedian.

"The easiest answer I can come up with is, when I was a child, I was subjected to a lot of ridicule, a lot of harassment by other children, and laughter didn't always feel good," she said. "I had to figure out a way to take control of that laughter, and make it work for me instead of against me."

When she was 12, Jewell started writing to Carol Burnett, who encouraged her comedic aspirations.

"She told me there were no guarantees in life, period. The important thing is to put out the effort and to try," said Jewell. "How does anyone know what they can do unless they try? I can't tell you how much that meant to me."

Jewell asked the audience to look for the abilities of disabled people, instead of focusing on their disabilities.

"It doesn't matter what people are. The only thing that should matter is who they are," she said. "My journey in life has very little to do with disability. It has more to do with ability."

Active Retirement Living in

NEIGHBORS AND FRIENDS FOR 19 YEARS