

Victory Party a smashing success

The Covina Sonrise Rotary held a hugely successful "World War II Victory Party" almost two weeks ago at the A-I Party Rentals warehouse on Front Street in Covina.

I arrived early to secure a parking place close to the entrance and was intrigued to see people arriving in WWII uniforms from all branches of the service.

Inside the gate was a very old "Woody" station wagon next to a military desert vehicle and the National Guard recruiting table.

A little farther on the registration table was set up inside a camouflaged tent.

There we were each issued our personal dog tags that would identify us for the silent and live auctions. We were given an opportunity to buy "ration coupons" to obtain luxury items such as fine liquors and wine, fine chocolates, Dime-A-Dance, fine cigars and to play the games.

Next there were several tables with newspapers announcing the end of the war.

As I walked through the various sections in the warehouse I ran in to Anita White and we spent the evening together and I certainly had a really great time.

The floor plan of the warehouse was sectioned. The first section was labeled the Pacific Theater. Here the hula dancers gathered at the Be-Back Bar



**Pat Sullivan's
Talk About Town**

next to the Hand Grenade Toss game and a military uniform display.

The next section was the European Theater and the Shooting Gallery where we had a chance to shoot down Folkker airplanes.

I had nine shots and hit my plane eight times. Raffle tickets were issued for each hit and we used them to enter the door prize drawing raffle putting our tickets in the bags in front of the prizes we wanted to take a chance on.

Needless to say, as usual, I didn't win a thing.

The main stage was next in the USO Canteen where the "Big Band Theory" played. All the musicians work at JPL and the business card claims that this is the "smartest band on the planet."

You can reach band director Patrick Olguin at (562) 682-5167. The music was from

the 1940's and I had a chance to relive my childhood listening and singing along to the almost forgotten songs.

The singer with the band was Debbie Llata from Glendale.

The "Swing Sisters" performed during the breaks. We thought they were professionals but found out later that they are karaoke singers who performed the old songs with gusto.

These sisters are Marion Arvanitopoulos, Zeke Schmidt and Josette Pacino. I think they had as much fun as we did.

Off to one side of the building was "Churchill's Cigar Lounge". There were cigars for sale and they were kept in ammunition boxes until they were sold.

The bathrooms were labeled "GI Joe" and "Rosie." I did see a couple of Rosie the Riveters during the evening.

The next section of the layout was the British Pub and there were two dart games there to play as well as another long table display of silent auction items.

Anita and I kept walking about the warehouse checking our bids on the silent auctions. When we weren't walking around we were in the European Theater — eating.

Our table companions were Rose and Carl Majors, Laura and Dean Montgomery and Michelle Bart.

While we were sitting in the European Theater the lights kept going out and for the longest time we thought it was part of the plans for the evening and that the organizers were simulating the blackouts that happened in England during the war.

We found out after a couple of hours that the circuit breakers kept tripping and it wasn't planned at all.

We saw so many people we know which made the evening even more fun. About halfway through the evening Dr. Shirley Harrison called the event the "Party of the Year."

The live auction was great. Galen Metz was the auctioneer and he came dressed as a French Resistance fighter complete with French accent at least until the auction started.

The Covina Sonrise Rotary members outdid themselves this year. I can't wait for next year's event.