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National Press Club Welcomes SDPC Member

By Lillian Cox

Over the holidays I hatched an ambitious plan to join millions of Americans converging on the nation's capital for the inauguration of Barack Obama.

I invited Joey Pearson, a young friend and honors student at the San Dieguito Academy who had just completed AP American history and aspired to study at Georgetown University and later run for office.

In my youth, I had the privilege of being invited to two presidential inaugurations through jobs at the Republican National Committee and the White House.

This time I was on my own.

Realizing that chances of seeing any inaugural activities were slim, I decided ahead of time to make the most of the reciprocity available between SDPC members and the venerable National Press Club located two blocks from the White House.

It was a good thing. After emerging from the Metro station at McPherson Square at 10:30 a.m. on Inauguration Day, and chilled to the bone, it was apparent by the sight of barricades that we were unable to get close to Pennsylvania Ave.

Instead we walked briskly to the National Press Building at 14th & F Sts. and took the ele-

vator to the 13th floor.

We were greeted by general manager Bill McCarren who took us on a tour, then invited us to view the inauguration in the members-only Truman Lounge.

Other than being seated on the Inaugural platform at the Capitol, there was no better way to enjoy the day than by toasting the new president with this intimate group of fellow journalists.

SDPC members traveling to the nation's capital shouldn't hesitate to take advantage of hospitality extended by the NPC.

Perks include access to the restaurants (Reliable Source Bar & Grill and Fourth Estate Fine Dining), the research library, the business center and the gym facilities.

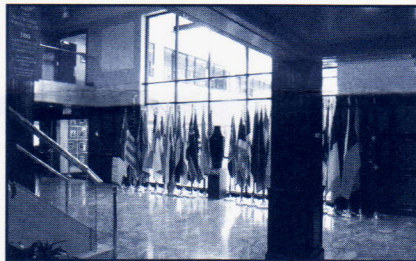
One of my favorite indulgences is to treat friends to Newsmaker Luncheons which are broadcast on C-SPAN. Recent speakers have included Dolly Parton and Fed chief Ben Bernanke.

To visit to the National Press Club, SDPC members need to present a membership card and letter of introduction.

For more information call Sara Driggs, NPC membership director, at (202) 662-7511 or visit www.press.org.



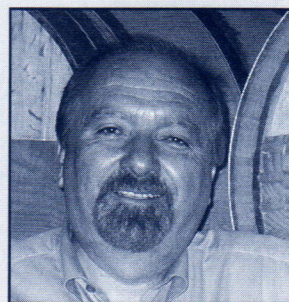
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(Top) Crowds gather to enjoy coverage of the Presidential Inauguration at the National Press Club.

(Left) Main lobby of the National Press Club.



Honorary member and generous friend of the Press Club Leon Santoro recently passed away at the age of 58 from lung failure while he was awaiting a lung transplant. Santoro, a veteran California winemaker from Napa Valley, put San Diego County on the international wine map as general manager and winemaker at Orfila Vineyards in the San Pasqual Valley. Throughout his career, his wines were well respected. In 1985, the White House presented his Quail Ridge Chardonnay at a dinner honoring Prince Charles and Princess Diana. And, in 1986, the U.S. Ambassador to Iceland purchased Quail Ridge Chardonnay for the superpower summit between Presidents Reagan and Gorbachev. At Orfila, Santoro's wines were awarded more than 1,300 medals in national and international wine competitions and favorably reviewed in many prestigious wine publications. He is shown with the San Diego Press Club 2006 Syrah which he produced and donated to the club following a memorable grape picking event.

Cheers, Leon!