

Rotary Club of Santa Barbara Sunrise
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Dolphin Derby Festival Returns to Chase Palm Park on July 13, 2025
Attendees can adopt dolphins to compete in multiple races for prizes, dance to live music, eat, drink, and play.

Santa Barbara, CA – July 1, 2025 – From noon to 5 p.m. on July 13, Chase Palm Park will be home to the once-a-year spectacle of the Dolphin Derby Festival. Admission is free, and spectators can watch thousands of miniature toy dolphins race down a giant inflatable water racecourse.

Each dolphin represents a \$10 donation, or adoption fee, to the Rotary Club of Santa Barbara Sunrise Charitable Foundation, a tax-exempt public charity, and gives the donor a chance to win cash prizes up to \$2,500—if their adopted dolphin is among the first across the finish line in one of the day’s four races.

DJ Darla Bea, who is hoping to add a 10th year to her winning streak of the Santa Barbara Independent Best of Santa Barbara in the Event DJ category, will make a splash at the event, serving as emcee and entertainment. She’s joined by award-winning wedding band director and saxophone instructor Gerry Smith Jr., who has shared the stage with Michael McDonald, Big Bad Voodoo Daddy, Tower of Power, and Postmodern Jukebox, among others.

Cousins Maine Lobster, Connie's Hot Dogs, and Kona Ice will have food available for sale. And adults over age 21 are invited to join the festivities in the beer and wine garden. The dog-friendly event will even host a Yappy Hour in the beer and wine garden starting at 4 p.m.

“This event invites our community to come out and frolic in the park and, if they want to adopt dolphins, to enjoy the thrill of the race,” Rotary Club of Santa Barbara Sunrise President Liz Alves said. “This day of play raises funds to support the good work we do in the community through signature Rotary programs and in partnership with local nonprofits.”

Dolphin adoptions are available online now through July 12 at www.dolphinderby.com, and you do not need to be present at the event to win. Dolphin adoptions will also be available at Chase Palm Park beginning at 12 p.m. on July 13, while supplies last.

Although vehicle parking at the park and along Cabrillo Boulevard is limited, attendees can park in one of many downtown lots and board the [Downtown-Waterfront Shuttle](#), which stops in front of Chase Palm Park. One-way fares are \$.50, or \$.25 for seniors and people with physical disabilities.

One of the frequently asked questions is whether people can keep the dolphins they adopt. The answer is no, but that's part of the event's commitment to being environmentally responsible. The dolphins are reused each year, and even the race water is recycled for each event and then used to irrigate the park grass.

The 2025 Dolphin Derby Festival Island Sponsors include Cox and Minno Rugged Tablets.

Other sponsors include Alpha Fire Unlimited, American Riviera Bank, Arlington Financial Advisors, Benchmark Portal, EdHat, Karen Y. Kawaguchi, Kathy Scroggs, Kirk

& Jann Greene, Lily Carey, Montecito Bank & Trust, Nasif, Hicks, Harris & Co, The Point Market, Paul & Judith McCaffrey, SAMsARA Wine Co., Santa Barbara Sailing Center, Santa Ynez Band of Chumash Indians, and Smith & Ortiz Insurance.

About the Rotary Club of Santa Barbara Sunrise and its charitable foundation

Local business, professional, and civic leaders for the Rotary Club of Santa Barbara Sunrise. As part of Rotary International, one of the largest service organizations in the world, the club members strive to provide service to others and to promote goodwill and peace.

During the past several years, the Rotary Club of Santa Barbara Sunrise Charitable Foundation has donated more than \$400,000 to humanitarian and community service projects in Santa Barbara and around the world.