



ROTARY SPOKES

Rotary Club of Ventura

Est. May 1, 1919

“The Friendliest Club in Rotary”

April 7, 2024

PHILANTHROPIST OF THE YEAR AWARD



The Rotary Foundation and the California Rotary Districts have been selected as the 2023 Bernard Osher Philanthropist of the Year by the Network of California Community College Foundations. The award was given in a special video presentation during our luncheon meeting April 3, 2024, with members of Rotary Ventura East in attendance.

Speakers at the presentation included Rotary International Director Dan Himelspach and Rotary 5240 District Governor Marta Golding Brown. Community college students and graduates gave inspiring statements about how they have benefitted.

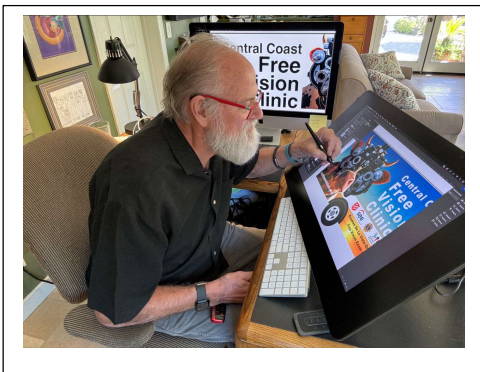
California community colleges serve 1.8 million students, fifty percent of whom experience food insecurity. Three years out from earning an AA degree, the average graduate earns \$11,000 more than high school graduates. Rotary has donated \$6.2 million to California community colleges.



COFFEE GROWING IN VENTURA



Dave Armstrong, CEO of Hobson Family Farms, gave a presentation at our meeting April 3, 2024. As economic factors have made lemon production less profitable, Hobson replaced lemon orchards with coffee growing and processing under the FRINJ Coffee label. The climate in their Aliso Canyon farm is ideal to grow the four award-winning coffee varieties they are using. With 18,000 coffee trees, it is the largest coffee farm in the mainland U.S. Hobson also produces the Flying H single-estate wines, vinegars, chili pastes, botanicals, tea, and beef.



The **Central Coast Free Vision Clinic** and its new Mobile Vision Clinic would not be possible without the volunteer efforts of members of our club and other community organizations. **Greg Wray** is shown here donating his talents designing the artwork for the bus wrap, all the promotional materials needed for fundraising, creating postcards, business cards, the Ribbon Cutting invitation, and the donor table tents. He built and published the Free Vision website and is currently developing the Clinic's Facebook page. Thanks to Greg and all who continue to provide this valuable resource to our community!

Happy Rotary Anniversary!

Jeff Lambert – 3 years
Keith Moschetto – 2 years

MEETING APRIL 3, 2024

Attendance: 40 members and guests, including many members from Rotary Club of Ventura East and guests Dave Armstrong (our speaker), Kellye's daughter Sophia, and Dave Russian.

Lunch: Chicken with red peppers and mozzarella, rice, asparagus, green salad, fruit, garlic bread, and for dessert ice cream with strawberries and pretzels.

Flag salute/introductions: **President Neal Lassila** began the meeting early to accommodate the full program. "We can serve our weakness, or we can serve our purpose." (St. Frances Cabrini, the first U.S. citizen to be canonized.) According to her biopic, the mayor of NYC told Cabrini, "It's a shame that you're a woman, you would have made an excellent man." She responded, "No, Mr. Mayor. Men couldn't do what we do."

Song: **Bev Ward** led us in singing "Zip-a-Dee-Doo-Dah" in honor of **Anne Paul King's** return from medical leave.

Announcements:

Linda Girtsman: The **Walk for Kids** to support Ronald McDonald House Charities family room at VCMC is April 21 at San Buenaventura State Beach, starting at 8:00 a.m. Tours of the facility can be arranged.

Carin Kally, President of Rotary Ventura East, is hosting **Food, Wine and Beer Festival**, together with Girl Scouts of California's Central Coast. At Camp Arnaz June 8, 2024, 3:00-7:00 p.m. Visit rotaryventuraeast.org for more information.

Kristin Taylor: Please bring clothing for babies and children to our meeting April 17 for the **Westminster Free Clinic**.

No Fining or Happy Dollars due to full program.



Art Viewing April 18, 5-6 p.m., Crowne Plaza Hotel (San Miguel Room). Please RSVP to Madhu.

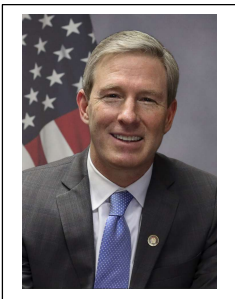
We are excited to share that we have received 31 art submissions for our Staci Johnson Ingram Memorial Perspectives on Peace Scholarship from Ventura Unified 12th graders who will be continuing their education after graduation. This unique offering continues to be one of a kind and fills a gap in art based scholarships that are not determined by essays/grades.

This year, we are excited to offer an evening social for members to view the art submissions. Students, parents, teachers and district representatives will also be invited. Thank you to Danny Quintana for hosting this gathering complimentary!

As students will be in attendance, we will be serving lemonade and cookies. If you would like to enjoy an adult beverage please do so at the Aqua Bar (no host) before or after you view the art.

UPCOMING EVENTS

April 10 lunch meeting: District Attorney Erik Nasarenko and Lead Human Trafficking Prosecutor Rikole Kelly.

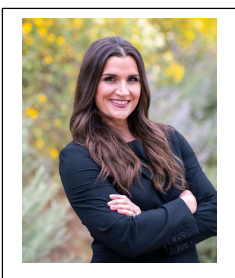


Erik Nasarenko was elected Ventura County District Attorney on June 7, 2022, after his unanimous appointment by the Board of Supervisors the prior year. As the County's top prosecutor overseeing more than 100 deputy district attorneys and 58 sworn investigators, Erik has initiated specialized efforts to prosecute fentanyl-based crimes, analyze untested rape kits, dismantle theft rings, and expand services to crime victims.

Prior to becoming District Attorney, Erik served and protected Ventura County as a senior prosecutor, where he secured jury trial convictions

against defendants for child molestation, rape, kidnapping and murder. In 2016, he was named Prosecutor of the Year by the Ventura County District Attorney for his trial advocacy on behalf of children, women, and sexual assault survivors.

Erik previously served as Mayor of Ventura and as a city councilmember. The son of Ukrainian immigrants, Erik grew up in the San Fernando Valley and is a graduate of the University of California, Irvine, where he studied American History and played intercollegiate soccer. He attended Loyola Law School at night while working during the day as a school district administrator. Married with two teenage children, Erik is a proud board member of the National Alliance for Mental Illness, also known as NAMI, California chapter.



Rikole Kelly – Deputy District Attorney. With over nine years of prosecutorial experience, Rikole Kelly has been a steadfast advocate for vulnerable victims. During her tenure at the San Diego County District Attorney's Office, she handled cases spanning misdemeanors to murders, specializing in arson and explosives. In 2021, Rikole transitioned to the Ventura County District Attorney's Office, where she is dedicated to the investigation and prosecution of human trafficking and sexual exploitation offenses. Collaborating closely with the Ventura County Human

Trafficking Task Force and the FBI Child Exploitation and Human Trafficking Task Force, she channels her expertise into raising awareness and ensuring accountability for perpetrators involved in these crimes.

April 17 lunch meeting: Stacey Zarazua and Eric Berg: Arroyo Verde Park Playground.

April 18: Perspectives on Peace: View the entries from 5-6 p.m. at the Crowne Plaza Hotel, San Miguel Room. To RSVP, see Madhu's email (4/4/24 @ 10:08 a.m.) Judges meet 6:00 p.m.

April 21: Walk for Kids at Buenaventura State Beach to support **Ronald McDonald House Charities** family room at VCMC. Registration opens 8:00 a.m. Program at 9:30 a.m. Walk begins 10:00 a.m. Wrap up at 12:00 p.m.

April 24: NO LUNCH MEETING. EVENING SOCIAL. Details to be announced.

April 25: Board Meeting, Crowne Plaza Hotel, 12:00-1:30 p.m.

May 4: Family BBQ and Social, Arroyo Verde Park, Redwood Glen BBQ Area, Foothill and Day Roads, Ventura, 11:00 a.m. to 2:00 p.m. Contact Madhu Bajaj to volunteer.