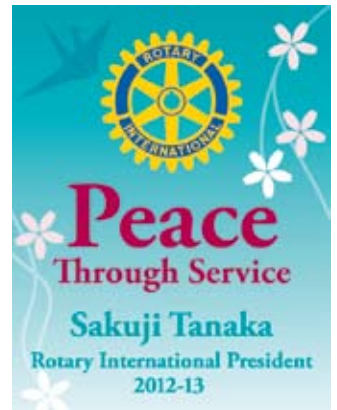


ROTARY SPOKES

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15 AUGUST 2012



A History of the Ojai Tennis Tournament

Today's speakers are a distinguished collection of long time Ventura Rotary Club members. Norm Blacher, Wayne Bruce and Hoot Bennett will be speaking on the history of a venerable local sports event, pointing out changes over the years that have kept the Tournament fresh and relevant.

The history of 'The Ojai®' really dates back to 1887 when Sherman Day Thacher came to Ojai to become a farmer and grow citrus. After building his stone house on 160 acres of land in the East End of the valley, he soon learned that he would require some financial assistance to survive, and so started tutoring students on the ranch, then called Casa de Piedra.

Brother William Thacher, the New England and intercollegiate tennis doubles champion while a junior at Yale University in 1886, came to the valley in 1890 for a family wedding, and stayed on to help with the school. In 1892, the first tennis court in the Valley was built on the school grounds. The first tennis tournament in Ojai was held on that court in 1893.

As part of his involvement with Valley and the town, then Nordhoff, Sherman Thacher helped found the Ojai Athletic Club in 1894; and the next year, William Thacher decided to form a club devoted to tennis, and so the Ojai Valley Tennis Club was born. The club quickly began to sponsor competition, and in 1896, the Ojai Valley Tennis Club absorbed the Athletic Club.

Competition in earnest started in 1896 with a challenge to the Ventura Tennis Club, a popular valley wide event. The following year, the Ojai Tennis Club sponsored inter-county competition, teaming with Ventura to challenge Santa Barbara; and later combined forces with Ventura and Santa Barbara to challenge Los Angeles and Pasadena. In the fall of 1897, William Thacher announced a "State

Tournament" which was to take place in April, 1898, and pit the best players of northern and southern California in a round robin match. The entire town was involved in this tournament, which featured decorations and social events, and the local railroad had special passenger fares and extra trains for the occasion.

Many of the greats of tennis have played in Ojai, including Bill Tilden, Tony Trabert, Bobby Riggs, Jack Kramer, Arthur Ashe, Billy Jean King, Pancho Gonzales, Alex Olmedo, Stan Smith, Jimmy Connors, Tracy Austin, Michael Chang, Lindsay Davenport, Pete Sampras and the Bryan twins. The "Wall of Fame" at the grandstand in Libbey Park names over 85 players who competed at Ojai, and won one or more of the major championships which make up the tennis "Grand Slam."

And so, after 112 years, much has changed, and yet much remains the same. Thousands of spectators fill the Valley for five days to watch the finest in amateur tennis, enjoy fresh orange juice in the mornings, and tea and cookies in the afternoon, all provided by a tennis club that has no courts of its own and no paid employees.



Bob and Mike Bryan, originally from Camarillo, have played the Ojai. Here they show off their 2012 Olympic gold medals in men's doubles from London.

Meeting of 01 August 2012

Our offsite meeting found us at the Ventura County Agriculture Museum in Santa Paula, which we toured and were given a presentation by the Museum director, Kevin Genovese.



Today's Agenda

Program:

*Norm Blacher, Wayne Bruce
& Hoot Bennett
"The Ojai Tennis Tournament"*

Introductions

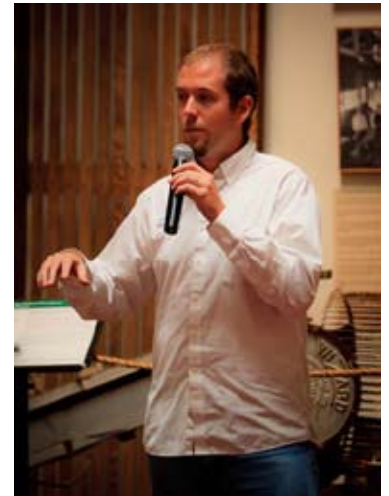
Rotary Moment

SusAnne Lee Chung

RoseAnn Hill

Fining

Cessy Figueroa



NEW MEMBER PROPOSALS

The following are proposed for membership:

BJ Fitzgerald, proposed by Indy Batra
with classification of "Education-Public Schools."

Jeanette Williams, proposed by Irene Henry
with classification of "Insurance" (New Generations)

If you have any objection to membership of any of these individuals in our club, please contact the President or Secretary in writing within seven days.

Meeting of 08 August 2012

We met at the Wedgewood Banquet and Wedding Facility at the Buenaventura Golf Course, where we were treated to a lunch comprising many salads, beef and fish; chicken wa conspicuously absent. Our speaker was the John Zaruca, President of the Wedgewood, which includes many facilities nationwide.



Upcoming Events

Blood Drive- TODAY!
Derby Club Parking Lot
Aug 15, 2012 10:00 AM

Board Meeting
Pierpont Inn
Aug 16, 2012 11:45 AM

Newcomers Breakfast
Crowne Plaza
Aug 24, 2012 07:30 AM

2012 District 5240 Conference
Queen Mary, Long Beach, CA
Sep 28 - 30, 2012





Next Week's Program
Sandra Laby
"Harmony Music Project"

August 11 Backpack Stuffing!



**Rotary Club of Ventura 2012-2013
Officers**

President	Indy Batra
President Elect	Irene Henry
Secretary	Jim Deardoff
Recording Secretary *	Larry Emrich
Treasurer	Connie Young
Assistant Treasurer *	Mark Sauer
Immediate Past President	Lynda Girtsman

*Non-Voting Position

Avenues of Service

Club Service

Director	Dan Holmes
Assistant Director	Mario de la Piedra

Community Service

Director	Ellyn Dembowski
Assistant Director	Ron Calkins

International Service

Director	Ed McCombs
Assistant Director	Christina Rust

New Generations

Director	Gary Young
Assistant Director	Courtney Lindberg

Vocational Service

Director	Todd Binkley
Assistant Director	Doug Halter

Rotary Spokes

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