



ROTARY SPOKES

Rotary Club of Ventura

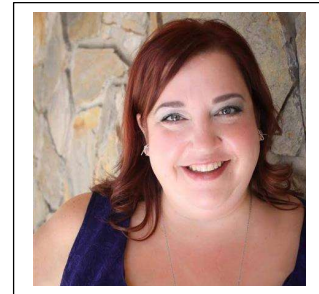
Est. May 1, 1919

"The Friendliest Club in Rotary"

August 5, 2022

COMMITTEE CHAIR MESSAGE--JESSICA BRANDON, FUNDRAISING CHAIR

(This is the first in a series of messages from a club officer, director, or committee chair, to inform our members about their roles and the activities they are leading.)



For more than 20 years I have worked in the non-profit world as a Fundraising Events Planner. This talent has helped me raise money for Cancer research, public gardens, people with developmental disabilities, foster children, and more. So it was a natural fit for me to become this year's Fundraising Chair. I have always been inspired by helping others. Growing up, my family worked together on many service projects. My Dad organized Thanksgiving dinners for the homeless. We would spend Thanksgiving morning delivering meals as a family. At Christmastime Mom would find a family in need to secretly adopt, we would gather toys, food, and clothing and then quietly deliver it all to the families' doorsteps on Christmas Eve.

When I joined this Club less than a year ago I knew I wanted to be an instrumental part of the Club's fundraising efforts. I was welcomed and mentored by the invaluable Lynda Girtsman and together, with a team of talented individuals, we planned the Food, Wine, & Beer Festival! It was a great success! This year we have several ideas to continue our efforts to fundraise and we ask you to join us throughout the year!

We kick off our fundraising in partnership with Ventura East and Ventura South for the inaugural **Tri-Rotary Casino Night**, benefiting a non-profit to help young people reach their full potential. This event will take place September 9th at Poinsettia Pavilion from 5:30-9:30 p.m. You don't want to miss this evening of Casino play, food, drinks, entertainment and even karaoke. Tickets are on sale now! \$75 for individual tickets and \$125 for couples. Click here to purchase tickets: <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/tri-rotary-casino-night-tickets-395501875757>

Make sure to save the date for our **Polio Day** event October 24th, 5:30-8:30 p.m. Location and details will be announced soon!

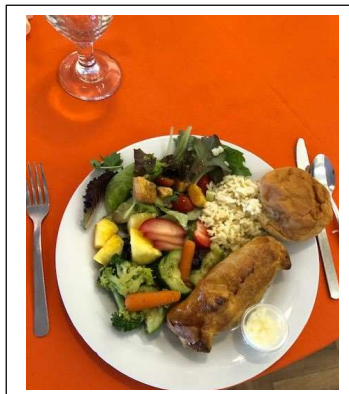
The 2nd Annual **Food, Wine & Beer Festival** will take place on April 22nd in partnership with the Girls Scouts of California's Central Coast at Camp Arnaz.

Fundraising is a Club effort and we welcome anyone interested in joining our committee! We are open to your ideas! Looking forward to seeing you all at Casino Night!

LUNCHEON MEETING AUGUST 3, 2022

Attendance—46 plus 3 via Zoom

Lunch—Chicken Wellington (puff pastry stuffed with chicken, spinach and cheese), rice, green salad, fruit salad, rolls



Kellye Patterson—**Flag salute, inspirational message, introductions.** When on their way to camping in Sequoia and Kings Canyon, Kellye’s children were surprised to see Rotary signs in rural towns. Rotarians impact communities throughout the country and the world, with more than 46,000 Rotary clubs worldwide.

Bev Ward and Jessica Brandon—**Song leaders:** “America the Beautiful”

Announcements:

Bev Ward—Rubicon’s Summer Youth Theatre presents **Mamma Mia!** August 5-14, at Villanova Prep in Ojai.

Ellyn Dembowski—Our 21st year of the **Backpack Project** will be August 20, starting 8:00 a.m., at Neighborhood Car Care, Ventura. The three Ventura Rotary clubs will join the Lions club to stuff backpacks with supplies for VUSD students in need. We also need drivers to deliver them to the schools.

Jessica Brandon—Tri-Rotary **Casino Night Fundraiser**, September 9, 5:30 to 9:30 p.m., Poinsettia Pavilion. (See her Committee Chair Message above.)

Maggie Curley—The Conejo Senior Volunteer Program will host their **Charity Karaoke** fundraiser August 7 at The Canyon, Agoura Hills. Doors open at 5 p.m., show starts at 6 p.m.

Greg Wray—**Finig**—true/false questions on a variety of subjects, including chiclephobia (fear of chewing gum).

Program—**Amy Bailey Jurewicz**, Executive Director of the Ventura Family **YMCA**. (See summary below.)



Amy Bailey Jurewicz, Executive Director of the Ventura Family YMCA, was the speaker at our August 3 meeting. Amy received her degree in Business and Marketing from Cal State Northridge and began with the Ventura YMCA in 2005. She was awarded the Channel Islands Association Director of the Year award in 2007. She oversees a \$3.8 million budget, over 150 in staff, and almost 6,000 members.

Amy summarized the history of the Ventura YMCA. It began in 1888 in a house on Santa Clara and Oak Streets. In the 1940s it built a log cabin across from the old Mound School. The initial emphasis was not on fitness programs, but on camping, including a program at Pine Valley Camp. In 1981, it purchased its current location on Telegraph Road.

During the COVID crisis, the Y had to respond to a series of shut-downs and public health orders, and had to lay off almost all its staff. At the request of the school district, it expanded its childcare program, taking over much of the space previously occupied with fitness programs. It then resumed day camps, and moved its fitness equipment into a tent. The Ventura Y was in danger of closing. But it is now rebuilding, and is at 5,890 members (74 percent of its previous membership).

The Y offers a variety of programs, including “starter” youth sports so kids can see what sports they like, health and wellness programs, free swim lessons for students in Title 1 schools, Away Camp, Livestrong for cancer survivors, and much more. Its outreach programs include Operation Ventura, which offers free programs to those who are homeless or in transitional living. The Y is grateful for the support from the community that makes programs accessible to all, regardless of ability to pay, including a \$4,000 donation from our Julius Guis Memorial Foundation.

Amy is a former member of our club, and we are excited that she is rejoining!



FIREWORKS REPORT



Ken Leandro reported on our July 3 Fireworks show. We did it! It is the largest event we have ever put on, and the largest citywide event, with over 7,500 in attendance. There is always room to improve in future years: we need more food trucks, more volunteers (especially for the children’s zone), more sub-committees, and more advanced planning. But the event was a great success!

Ken gave thanks to the 40 organizations and individuals who sponsored the event, including 28 Rotarians. Major sponsors were Trade Desk, Wheelhouse, Auto Center, Hofer Properties, and Community Memorial Health System. More than 40 club members volunteered the night of the event (and the day before, and the day after), plus spouses, children, and members of Interact, Downtown Lions, FTHS cross-country, BHS football, Scout troop parents, and community members. Special thanks to committee chair Ken Leandro, and committee members Neal Lassila, Dave Wellik, Saurabh Bajaj, Rob Van Nieuwburg, Anil Aggarwal, Aaron Campbell, Keith Moschetto, Karl Waage, Roger Case and Steve Dato. And special thanks for in-kind and professional services from Brenda Allison (insurance), Mark Sauer (accounting), Saurabh Bajaj (printing) and Sally Crain (storage and truck).

Ken’s favorite part of the event was prompted by messages on social media that questioned why, in these divisive times, we should celebrate this country. Ken gave a fitting response: Our Rotary club includes members of all kinds—including different political parties, races, ethnicities, gay and straight—all brought together with the goal of Service Above Self. We are a model of how Americans can join together to serve our community.

UPCOMING EVENTS

(For up-to-date and more complete information, go to the Calendar on our web site, VenturaRotary.org, then click on the date for details, or bring up the List view)

August 10 lunch meeting: Conversations with Rotary. Like a “craft talk” or “member spotlight” of a club member, but in question-answer format hosted by Bev Ward.

August 17 lunch meeting: Speaker **Joseph Algiers, Restoration Ecologist, National Park Service.** Joey has more than 15 years’ experience working in resource management for the Santa Monica National Recreation Area. He leads the park’s restoration program. He directs the

invasive plant control program, which includes weed treatments of the park's most ecologically damaging species. Joey works with the park's native plant nursery manager where native plants are grown for restoration, education, research, and conservation. For years, Joey has been managing, training, and educating technicians, students, partners, and the public in restoration ecology practice and theory.

August 20 Backpack Project: Meet at 8 a.m. at Neighborhood Car Care, 1838 E. Thompson Blvd., Ventura, to fill backpacks with school supplies for VUSD students in need. We also need drivers to deliver the backpacks to the schools.

August 24 lunch meeting: Speaker **Mara Rodriguez**, animal trainer and zoo development coordinator at **America's Teaching Zoo**, located at Moorpark College. Mara was named Ventura County Community College District 2022 Classified Employee of the Year.

August 25: Book Club, 5 p.m. RSVP to Karynsue for location. Discussion of *From White to Black: One Life Between Two Worlds*. Iris Duplantier Rideau shares her story of becoming the first Black woman to own a winery in this country. All club members welcome, even if you have not read the book, or only pretend that you read it. If you have a suggestion for a book to read in the future, let Madhu know.

August 31 NO LUNCH MEETING. Instead, we'll have a **BARBEQUE** at Karynsue's condo complex at Portside, Ventura Harbor, 6 p.m.

September 4 lunch meeting: program to be announced.

September 9: Casino Night. 5:30 to 9:30 p.m., Poinsettia Pavilion. The Rotary Club of Ventura, Ventura East, and Ventura South will come together in support of a local non-profit organization for the inaugural Tri Rotary Casino Night. Enjoy an evening of casino play, dinner, drinks, opportunity drawing, karaoke, and entertainment. Food provided by Himalaya Restaurant, Stonefire Grill, Domino's Pizza, Stephen's Market & Grill. No Host Bar. Individual Tickets - \$75 each includes \$100 of casino play, dinner, entertainment and more! Couples Tickets - \$125 for 2 includes \$200 of casino play, dinner, entertainment and more! Tickets Link: <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/395501875757>

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