



ROTARY SPOKES

Rotary Club of Ventura

Est. May 1, 1919

"The Friendliest Club in Rotary"

January 28, 2024

CONGRESSMAN SALUD CARBAJAL



Congressman Salud Carbajal addressed the club at our meeting January 24, 2024. He was the youngest of seven children. He came to the United States at 5 years old when his father was a fieldworker in the Bracero program. His father then got a great job in a copper mine in Arizona. When the mine closed, Salud and his family moved to the La Colonia neighborhood in Oxnard.

Salud worked hard in school and was employed summers as a farmworker. He earned a bachelor's degree from UCSB and a master's degree in Organizational Management from the Fielding University. He served eight years in the U.S. Marine Corps Reserve including active duty in Jacksonville, N.C. during the Gulf War.

When a Santa Barbara County Supervisor hired him as chief of staff, Salud learned about government, running for office, public policy, and what government can do. Carbajal ran for the seat when the supervisor retired and served four terms. He was first elected to the House of Representatives in 2016 and is now in his fourth term. Like all members of the House, he must run for office every two years. (Can you imagine doing that??)

Congressman Carbajal believes in working beyond our differences and, when possible, works across the aisle in Congress. He is a member of the Problem Solvers Caucus, which has equal numbers of Democrats and Republicans. He discussed a number of the bills he has sponsored.

(continued)

CONGRESSMAN CARBAJAL, continued

Congressman Carbajal commented that Rotary provides “ladders of opportunity” by providing coats, financial assistance, and services. He believes that Congress could learn from the Rotarians in our community.

This is the first time I heard Congressman Carbajal speak. I appreciated getting to know about him as a person and what issues he believes are important. I assume not all members of our politically diverse club share all his views. But because his district includes most of the City of Ventura, he represents many of us in Congress, and it was a good opportunity to learn about the bills he has sponsored.

PACIFIC HIGH SCHOOL INTERACT AT CITY HALL



On January 22, 2024, members of the Pacific High School Interact Club met with city leaders at Ventura City Hall. They have been studying the problem of opioid abuse this year and shared their findings with Public Information Officer Heather Sumagaysay, Deputy Mayor Dr. Jeannette Sanchez-Palacios, and Councilmember Doug Halter. They later spoke with Mayor Joe Schroeder, and received a tour of city hall by City Clerk Michael MacDonald. At the City Council meeting the following evening, the Council gave a “shout out” to the students.

HAPPY ROTARY ANNIVERSARY!

Neal Lassila

5 years

Mike Schwartz

4 years

Anil Aggarwal

3 years

BOARD HIGHLIGHTS

The Rotary Club of Ventura Board of Directors met on Thursday, January 25, 2024, at the Crowne Plaza. Starting this month, the **Board Agenda and Minutes** will be sent out via email with the newsletter. (Board Minutes and lots of other stuff can also be found on the club's website under Member Area/Organization/Documents.)

The Board approved a schedule of exciting **speakers and programs** for our noontime meetings from February through May. They are listed on our website.

Neal Lassila will continue on as **President** for the 2024-2025 Rotary year unless someone else steps up. **Joslynn Skelton** is slated to serve as President for 2025-2026.

The **Fireworks event** is moving forward, with the pyrotechnics contract "in hand." The **Sponsorship Committee** is already meeting, and additional members are encouraged to join.

The Board approved a much-changed version of the **Beachside Bash** for Sept. 28, 2024. Incorporating lessons learned from this year's event, the plan is to get a caterer or a group like the Lions to have a barbeque (no food trucks), and to hire a well-known musical act. No car show, fewer volunteers, and a different location.

Neal Lassila has been attending the **Ventura Chamber of Commerce** on behalf of the club. Ken Leandro will take over. Kellye Patterson spearheaded a **Young Rotarians** meeting (club members age 49 or below) and plans to do it again quarterly.

Our club will co-sponsor the **Albania/Romania International Project** to provide ophthalmology and other medical equipment to Lezha (Albania) Regional Hospital. The project is sponsored by the Rotary Club of Lezha, the Cambria Rotary Club, and the Santa Maria Breakfast Rotary. We are not required to commit funds to the project but may do so later.

All the **Perspectives on Peace** entries will be displayed at the Crowne Plaza on April 18, with everyone welcome to attend. The judges will meet later that evening to select the winners. Awards will be given at our luncheon meeting May 22.

In response to member suggestions, we will test changes in our **monthly meeting schedule** in March and April—three luncheon meetings and one evening meeting. We'll see how it goes!

A **Rise Against Hunger** event is scheduled for April 24, with all Ventura Interact clubs participating (Ventura, Foothill, Pacific, Buena, and Bonaventure).

After discussion of the **Dictionary Project**, it was agreed that it will proceed with no Board vote needed because the funds have already been budgeted. Dictionaries (which also include reference material) will be given to about 900 Ventura third graders at a cost of about \$3,700.

Discussion of taking over the **Chalk Art Festival**, Sept. 9-10. No action taken.

Madhu Bajaj commented that if anyone wants to include a **slide** to be shown before our weekly meetings, please send them to her in PowerPoint format by 5:00 p.m. on the Monday before the meeting.

MEETING JANUARY 24, 2024

Attendance: 43 including visiting Rotarian Bruce McGee (Ventura East) and 10 guests.

Lunch: Tri-tip with salsa, potato spears, creamy vegetables, fruit, green salad, and brownies with custard for dessert.

Flag salute/introductions/inspirational message: **RoseAnn Hill.** She shared a quote from Henry Ford about our attitude toward success or failure: “Whether you think you can, or you think you can’t—you’re right.”

Song: **Bev Ward, RoseAnn Hill and Clyde Reynolds** led us in singing “This Land Is Your Land.”

Announcements:

Kristin Taylor: Coats for Kids: Thanks to Patti, Keith, RoseAnn, her husband Dave, and her brother Richard, who met at Hilford Moving and Storage for three hours to sort through donated coats. One more sorting event is coming. And thanks to Danny Quintana and the Crowne Plaza for cleaning 100 percent of the coats!

Madhu Bajaj: (1) No lunch meeting January 31. Please RSVP if you will be attending the January 31 **evening meeting at Food Share.** If possible, please bring a bag of canned food to donate.

(2) Thanks to all who participated in the **Day of Joy at Pacific High School.** It was a welcome break for the students as they begin to prepare for final exams.

Margi Wray: Joslynn Skelton has agreed to serve as **President** for the 2025-2026 year.

Brenda Allison-Hutchinson: (1) Each member’s **invoice** is being individually audited to ensure we are charged the right amount.

(2) She is going to **New Zealand** this weekend. During her absence, **Rob van Nieuwburg** is handling checks, and **Rena Sepulveda** is helping with all other treasurer matters.

(3) If you have filled out a **fine slip**, please give it to Brenda before the speaker starts.

Saurabh Bajaj: Seeking more members for the **Fireworks Sponsorship Committee.** It meets right after our Wednesday lunch meetings. We need to increase the amount of sponsorships to the level of a couple years ago.

Happy Dollars.

Fining: Lynda Girtsman collected money from those unable to answer riddles that she apparently got from a primary school joke book.

UPCOMING EVENTS

(For more complete and up-to-date information, check the ClubRunner app on your phone, or our website)

January 31: NO NOONTIME MEETING. Evening meeting at FoodShare, 4156 Southbank Road, Oxnard, 5:30 to 7:00 p.m. One in four people in Ventura County struggle with food insecurity. Join us to learn how FoodShare makes a difference every day. CEO Monica White will provide an update on FoodShare and give a tour. Dinner will be served. You must wear closed toe shoes as we will be taking a tour of the warehouse. Children are welcome to attend, but they must be very closely supervised by their parent. While not required, it is highly encouraged to bring a donation of canned food when visiting a food bank or food pantry. If you cannot attend and would like to donate canned food in support of our visit, please bring to FASTSIGNS 3959 E. Main St M-F 9:00-5:30. Questions: madhubajaj@gmail.com. RSVP and dinner selection: <https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSd-zoxU3WhCrmmsOy2wcqXrljyAyYJSUNsbKlKyOIwzZwt2cw/viewform?pli=1>

February 7 lunch meeting: Ventura High School Interact Club will tell us about all their activities. Baked goods will be available for sale but we will not hold an auction.

February 14 lunch meeting: Jean Rodriguez, Turning Point/Growing Works. This wholesale nursery for native plants and succulents assists those with mental health diagnoses.

February 21 lunch meeting: Rhett Mauck, National Disaster Search Dog Foundation.

February 28 lunch meeting: David Maron, Ventura County Civic Alliance report.