



# ROTARY SPOKES

## Rotary Club of Ventura

Est. May 1, 1919

“The Friendliest Club in Rotary”

July 30, 2023



Ventura Chamber of Commerce Board Chair **Dena Rogers** and President/CEO **Stephanie Caldwell** gave a presentation at our luncheon meeting July 26, 2023. The Chamber was established in 1899. Currently 700 businesses are members. The Chamber works to improve Ventura for everyone, not just members.

The Chamber is a catalyst for business growth. It focuses on quality of life, diversity, attracting new high-growth businesses, and working with the city to develop growth processes. Economic growth cannot be based solely on tourism and hospitality—instead, we need to attract high-paying jobs.

The speakers discussed some of the Chamber’s many activities, including: Principal for a Day (with VUSD), Teacher of the Month, the Ventura County Pride Festival, Spark of Love Toy Drive, job fairs, business expos, lunch mobs to support member restaurants, mixers, a young professionals program, and the Saint Patrick’s Day Parade. Each week, the Chamber reviews the upcoming City Council agenda for issues of interest. Each quarter, it issues a list of nonprofits who are looking for leaders and volunteers.

Emerging issues are:

- The housing crisis, which is the single largest impediment to economic development in Ventura.
- The labor crisis, with 10,000 workers recently leaving the workforce.
- Insurance, because some carriers no longer write fire insurance in Ventura.
- Water and climate change, including connecting to State Water and Ventura Water Pure.
- Declining school enrollment because young families cannot afford to live here.

Dena completed the program by listing many new businesses that have opened in Ventura.

## MEETING JULY 26, 2023

**Attendance:** This was our last meeting for a while in Santa Paula Room—we move back next week to the more spacious Ventura Room. I counted about 34 members and guests.

**Lunch:** Food Affairs by Stacey served a delicious lunch of both vegetarian and ham quiches, Caesar salad, cucumber and tomato salad, watermelon with feta, fruit salad, and sorbet for dessert.

**Introductions: Mike Schwartz** (that’s me!). July 26 was the 33rd anniversary of the enactment of the Americans with Disabilities Act. I shared a quote from Ram Dass that suggests we accept different kinds of people the same way we accept different kinds of trees.

**Song: RoseAnn Hill:** “America the Beautiful”

**Monica Smith** was inducted as a **new member**. She is Strategic Health Systems Manager at Mammotone, Inc. Welcome to the Friendliest Club in Rotary!



**Hutch** presented **John Johnson** with his **Paul Harris Plus 4** pin (sapphires). John received his first Paul Harris award in 1987 and joined the Ventura Rotary in 1989. He was President 2002-2003 and is a Benefactor. Congratulations!

### Announcements:

**Indy Batra:** The Vitalant **Bloodmobile** was in the parking lot during the meeting, with a number of members donating blood. We hope to do blood drives periodically, with the next one maybe in October. Thanks to Indy for organizing this, and to all who donated!

**Betsy Chess:** She distributed free County Fair concert seat tickets and rodeo tickets.

**Sandy Lassila:** Volunteer sign-up sheet will be available soon for the Sept. 23 Beachside Bash, 11 a.m. to 5 p.m., at Buenaventura State Beach.

**Margi Wray:** Is organizing a Restaurant Raid for Karynsue Rose-Thomas’s new gelato-kofi bar, CRAVE.

**MEETING JULY 26, 2023 (continued)**

**Happy Dollars.**

**Fining:** **Anne King** quizzed us about the history of Ventura County because this is the county's 150th anniversary.

**CELEBRATING CLUB ANNIVERSARIES**

**Steve Doll**  
July 29, 1988  
25 years

**Betsy Chess**  
July 30, 2007  
16 years

**Patricia Roberts**  
July 31, 2021  
2 years

**HAPPY BIRTHDAY!**

**Anil Aggarwal**  
July 30

**PROSPECTIVE MEMBER**

The Board has accepted the membership application of **Rena Sepulveda**, Contracts and Grant Manager for Turning Point Foundation. Her membership is sponsored by Brenda Allison-Hutchinson. Pursuant to the New Member Process of our club's Continuing Resolution, if you have objections to her membership, please contact a board member within the next 7 days.

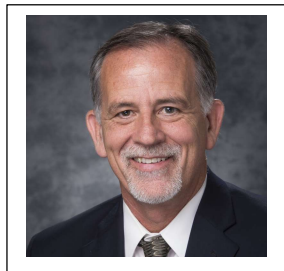
**BOARD HIGHLIGHTS**

The Board of Directors met in the Anacapa Room of the Crowne Plaza Hotel on July 27, 2023, from 12:00-1:30 p.m. The Board will be approving this year's budget, bylaws, and continuing resolution in the next few weeks. Margi Wray was appointed as Chair of the Nominating Committee. Saurabh Bajaj is President of the Julius Gius Memorial Rotary Foundation. Patti Birmingham updates member information in ClubRunner. Programs for club meetings in August and September were approved (see our club website for information).

About 6,000 attended this year's fireworks event. Although the sponsorships were less than last year, the food truck operation and kids zone volunteers went more smoothly, everyone had great fun, and we made a nice profit.

## UPCOMING EVENTS

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



**August 3 lunch meeting: John Fankhauser, MD, MHA, CEO of Ventura County Medical Center and Santa Paula Hospital.** Dr. Fankhauser will be sharing his experience during the Ebola Crisis and its aftermath as well as how partnerships with Rotary contributed to the recovery from this tragedy.

Dr. Fankhauser has served as a physician executive for the past fifteen years with a focus on public service and care for the underserved. His

previous roles include Chief Medical Officer (CMO) for Ventura County Health Care Agency and CMO for Santa Clara Valley Medical Center in San Jose. Prior to 2007, he was a member of the faculty for the Ventura Family Medicine Residency Program.

Dr. Fankhauser is a graduate of the University of Washington School of Medicine and elected to Alpha Omega Alpha Honor Medical Society. He received a Master's in Healthcare Administration from the University of Minnesota.

From 2013 to 2018, Dr. Fankhauser was involved in a medical mission in Liberia where he served as the CEO of ELWA Hospital, a facility that played a critical role during the Ebola crisis. When three of his American colleagues contracted Ebola Virus Disease, he and a small team of doctors treated them and evacuated them to specialized biocontainment units in the U.S. In 2020 he received the UW School of Medicine Alumni Humanitarian Award.

**August 9 lunch meeting: Craft Talks by Andie Contarino and Crista Hermance.**

**August 16 lunch meeting: Janet Barron, Court Appointed Special Advocates.**

**August 23 lunch meeting: Saurabh Bajaj, Julius Gius Memorial Rotary Foundation update.**

**August 24: Board Meeting, 12:00-1:30 p.m., Crowne Plaza Hotel.**

**August 30: NO LUNCH MEETING—EVENING MEETING** at Stembassador's Idea Center.

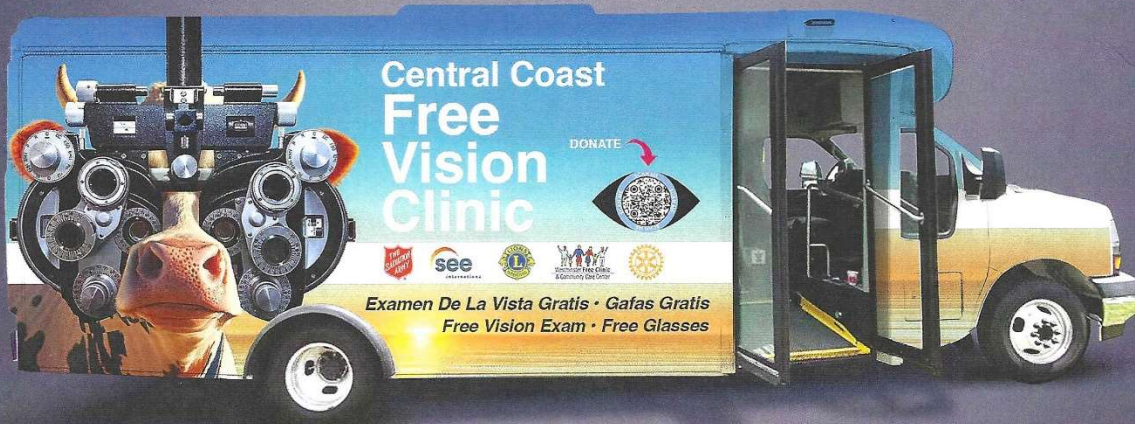


**Sept. 23: End of Summer Beachside Bash**, national ribeye steak cookoff, brew fest, car show, and more. San Buenaventura State Beach, 11 a.m. to 5 p.m.

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