



# ROTARY SPOKES

## Rotary Club of Ventura

Est. May 1, 1919

"The Friendliest Club in Rotary"

June 30, 2024

### MEETING JUNE 26, 2024

**Attendance:** We held the last meeting of the Rotary year with **30 members and guests**, including Mary Saputo (rejoining as a regular member) and guests Carole Gonzalez (our club bookkeeper), and Tony Dybeku (Water's Edge Restaurant)

**Lunch:** Chicken breasts, succotash, stuffed baked potatoes, bean salad, cucumber/tomato salad, fruit, and a patriotic red, white and blue strawberry shortcake for dessert.

**Flag salute/introductions: Lynda Girtsman.** She shared the poem "**Indispensable Man**" by Saxon White Kessinger:

Sometime when you're feeling important;  
Sometime when your ego's in bloom  
Sometime when you take it for granted  
You're the best qualified in the room,

Sometime when you feel that your going  
Would leave an unfillable hole,  
Just follow these simple instructions  
And see how they humble your soul;

Take a bucket and fill it with water,  
Put your hand in it up to the wrist,  
Pull it out and the hole that's remaining  
Is a measure of how you'll be missed.

You can splash all you wish when you enter,  
You may stir up the water galore,  
But stop and you'll find that in no time  
It looks quite the same as before.

The moral of this quaint example  
Is do just the best that you can,  
Be proud of yourself but remember,  
There's no indispensable man.



Bev Ward gave a beautiful rendition of "The Star-Spangled Banner," which she will perform at our July 4 Fireworks event.



## Announcements:

**Neal Lassila:** (1) Thanks to **Margi, Lynda, Kellye, Sandy, and Andrea** for organizing the **Step Down Dinner**.

(2) **Neal** and **Brenda** will be scheduling **budget planning meetings** with each of next year's board members.

**Kristin Taylor: Coats for Kids:** Thanks to all who collected over 400 coats from schools' unclaimed property, and to Sally Crain at Hilford Moving for storing the coats. We will sort them after July 4.

**Brenda Allison-Hutchinson:** (1) More **Fireworks volunteers** are needed. Please sign up on SignUpGenius. <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/10C0C4BA5A92BA1FAC43-49814613-ventura>

(2) Thanks to **Saurabh Bajaj** for chairing the **Fireworks sponsorships**. The checks keep coming in!

(3) **Events sheets** are ready for us to record receipt of funds. We are now "road testing" them and feedback is welcome.

(4) We have transitioned to **electronic checks**. If you need a check for club expenses, send Brenda a form or email.

**Madhu Bajaj:** Reminder that **NO MEETING July 3**.

## Happy Dollars.

**Fining:** **Margi Wray** asked tough questions about the 4th of July.

### PROGRAM: JULY 4

A patriotically attired **Madhu Bajaj** began by leading a **table exercise** in which we discussed what patriotism means to us.

**Saurabh Bajaj** shared the progress of **sponsorships** . . . despite the absence of two large donors from last year, we are doing well. Rotary Ventura South and East have generously contributed this year. Sponsorships will not be enough to cover all our expenses, but ticket sales will make up the difference with enough left over for us to make charitable contributions.

**Ken Leandro** discussed the 10 years he has been involved in the event—first as a committee member, then as chair. Our club first hosted the event in 1994-2013. Ken got involved when we resumed in 2015 and, among other innovations, started an event

web site and online sales. He thanked **Brenda** for organizing volunteers, and **Andrea** for executing sponsorship packages including banners, social media posting, and paid print and radio ads. Thanks to **Greg Rents** for donating light towers and speakers.

**Brenda Allison-Hutchinson** needs **more volunteers**, including removing banners and other clean-up.



## PAUL HARRIS AWARDS

Members were honored with Paul Harris pins at the Step Down Dinner, in recognition of contributions to the Rotary Foundation (my apologies for not having photos):

**Brenda Allison-Hutchinson**  
Paul Harris + 8

**Rob van Nieuwburg**  
Paul Harris + 8

**Sally Crain**  
Paul Harris + 5

**Madhu Bajaj**  
Paul Harris + 3

**Margi Wray**  
Paul Harris + 2

**Jeff Lambert**  
Paul Harris + 2

And three more awards were given at the June 26 meeting:



**RoseAnn Hill**  
Paul Harris + 5



**Ken Leandro**  
Paul Harris + 4



**Mike Schwartz**  
Paul Harris + 3

## BOARD HIGHLIGHTS

The club's Board of Directors met June 27, 2024, at the Crowne Plaza. The first order of business was to approve the minutes from the May 23 meeting, which nominated the following **2024-2025 board members and officers**, subject to member approval:

President (continuing) – Neal Lassila

President-Elect – Joslynn Skelton

President-Elect Nominee – TBD (Margi chairing search)

Club Services – Margi Wray Director; assistant Director TBD

Membership – Andie Contarino Director; Kellye Patterson Assistant Director

Community Services – Joslynn Skelton Director (continuing); Danny Quintana, Assistant Director; Madhu Bajaj Peace Builder Committee Chair

Youth Services – Ken Leandro Director (continuing); Keith Moschetto Asst. Director

Vocational Services – Greg Wray Director; Assistant Director TBD

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## **BOARD HIGHLIGHTS, *continued***

International Services – Dan Holmes Director; Assistant Director TBD

Communications Chair – TBD; need suggestions to fill this role (could be 3 people)

RI Foundation Chair – Hutch Hutchinson

Secretary – Rob van Nieuwburg

Executive Secretary – Patti Birmingham

Treasurer – Brenda Allison-Hutchinson

The **Fireworks** event is on track. There was discussion about the proposed dormitories at Ventura College that could interfere with the area we use for the event in future years. Funding for the dorm project is stalled for now. If it becomes an issue in future years, we can consider moving to another location like the Fairgrounds, with the potential for greater attendance and more revenue.

Plans for the **Harbor Chalk Art Festival Sept. 14-15** are progressing. We are seeking general sponsors, and sponsors for specific artists. (Dan, Lynda, Sally)

Plans for the **Beachside Bash** are also progressing. The plan is for a barbeque event September 29 at the Poinsettia Pavilion. (Neal)

**Margi Wray** is chairing a committee to propose **restructured membership types and costs**. **Kellye** and **Andie** will then form a committee to implement the changes.

**Next board meeting will be a week early, on July 18, 2024.**

## **UPCOMING EVENTS**

**July 3: No lunch meeting.**

**July 4: Fireworks Show and Family Picnic**, Ventura College, 5:00-10:00 p.m. This joyous event includes a spectacular fireworks show, live music, food vendors, a Kids Fun Zone, and what we like to call “the friendliest hometown picnic in America”! For information and tickets: <https://www.venturafireworks.com/> Sign up to volunteer at <https://www.signupgenius.com/go/10C0C4BA5A92BA1FAC43-49814613-ventura>

**July 10 lunch meeting: Club Assembly.** Discussion to plan for the new Rotary year, including presentations by Avenues of Service Directors and proposed new membership categories and costs.

**July 17: No lunch meeting. Evening meeting at Mesa Farm** 6:15-7:30 p.m., including discussion with Mesa board members and pizza from Boccali’s.

**July 18: Board meeting**, Crowne Plaza Hotel, 12:00-1:30 p.m.

**August 22: Board meeting**, Crowne Plaza Hotel, 12:00-1:30 p.m.

**Sept. 14-15: Chalk Art Festival**, Ventura Harbor Village.

## JULY BIRTHDAYS

**Crista Hermance**  
July 3

**Irene Henry**  
July 8

**Barbara Asbell**  
July 10

**Mike Schwartz**  
July 11

**Rob van Nieuwburg**  
July 13

**James Newton**  
July 14

**Roger Case**  
July 20

**Anil Aggarwal**  
July 30



## JULY ROTARY ANNIVERSARIES

**Jim Newton**  
40 years

**Mike Montoya**  
35 years

**Steve Doll**  
26 years

**Betsy Chess**  
21 years

**Ellyn Dembowski**  
20 years

**Irene Henry**  
20 years

**Saurabh Bajaj**  
15 years

**Laura Dunbar**  
8 years

**Hien Nguyen**  
8 years

**Karl Waage**  
5 years

**Patricia Roberts**  
3 years

**Monica Smith**  
1 year

