



ROTARY SPOKES

*The Rotary Club of Ventura
Weekly Bulletin
"The friendliest club in Rotary"
100% Paul Harris Club*



Editor: Maria Berntson maria@lindsayandcompanycpa.com
Assistant Editors: Betsy Chess, Curtis Cormane
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Photographers: John McConica II, Dan Holmes
Jim Deardorff, Steve Doll
March 7, 2012

Meeting of February 29, 2012

Travels of a Foreign Service Officer: Peter Higgins, State Dept .Counsel

Reporter: Betsy Chess



Kathy Scroggs handled Introductions and read the prayer of St. Francis for her Invocation. **RoseAnn Hill** led us in Happy Birthday to **Chris Brashears**, a Leap Year baby!

Announcements

Prez **Lynda Girtsman** said there was a Rotaract recruiting event next Monday at Red Brick Gallery. Prez-elect **Indy Batra** announced the District 5240 Assembly would be held at Pacifica High School in Oxnard on March 31st.

Bill Finley invited us to bring our outstanding employees to lunch next week, an annual event that is part of our ongoing Community Service endeavors. **Todd Binkley** reminded readers for Dr. Seuss's Birthday at EP Foster and Sheridan Way schools—Friday, March 2nd.

Steve Doll said the Literacy Ride is looking for sponsors who will be listed on special Ride water bottles. Thanks to **John Brant** for designing new route. This is our Club fundraiser this year. Look forward to the post-Ride Bar B Que!



Steve Kipp announced the placemat project concludes this week. Prez Lynda is asking everyone to come out to participate in the March 17th St. Patrick's Day Parade in Downtown Ventura!

Rotary Moment

Christina Rust shared that Rotary events – Backpacks and the Parade – are her granddaughter's favorites. Christina is proud that her granddaughter will continue the Rotary legacy.



Fining

SusAnne Lee Chung made us scratch our heads and laugh with a quiz on "stories behind the clichés". Oh my, the things we didn't know we need to know!

Happy Dollars

We celebrated a wonderful mix of good things.

Web addresses: Club www.venturarotary.org – Photos: www.rotarycov.smugmug.com
District 5240 www.rotarydistrict5240.org – R.I. www.rotary.org

Meeting Programs & Assignments

Programs

Chair: Larry Emrich

Today, March 7, 2012

Rotary and the NIDs, featuring Larry Emrich

Mar 14- Nicaragua Project

Mar 21- Photographing and Saving the Upper Owens Valley

Mar 28- All that Jazz

Introductions

Chair: Ron Calkins

Mar 7 – Scott Patterson

Mar 14 – Tom Naylor

Mar 21 – Rosa Lee Measures

Rotary Moment

Chair: Terri Adams

Mar 7 – Larry Emrich

Mar 14 – Terry Schaeffer

Mar 21 – Sonny Shah

Fining

Chair: Ron Bamieh

Mar 7 – Terry Schaeffer

Mar 14 – David Loe

Mar 21 – Margo Byrne



Program

Hoot Bennett introduced Peter Hoot Bennett, former State Department Foreign Service Counsel and Rotarian from the Oxnard Club. Peter reminded us that Oxnard, at 91, is a year younger than our club.

In 1924 the Diplomatic and Counselor Services were combined to create the Foreign Service. Peter said FS employees serve in 256 posts abroad. In his day the FS consisted of 3600 people, many of whom are career ambassadors and counsels. The rest are political appointees.

Peter was involved in reporting and administration. He and his family served in nine posts on five continents plus a year in Washington D.C. at the National War College. He said they chose to live away from the embassies if possible, and to have their children attend local schools. Peter said he met the gamut of people, from Pope John Paul to Idi Amin.

His first post was to Guadalajara, Mexico, where FS people enjoyed cheap labor and plenty of tequila. Because the Bracero Program was in place, illegal immigration was not an issue. Worked largely with expats and U.S. tourists who had problems. Then was sent to Madrid in 1962 for two years. Spain was then a nation in change transitioning from Franco to freedom.

Peter then returned to DC and worked on African affairs from 1964-67. Next sent to the former German colony of Togo, which was administered by France after World War I. He said it was an interesting mix of cultures – great German beer, French language and French food and African customs.

He was next posted to Barcelona, then to Ottawa, Canada at a time when U.S. policies were not popular. His next post was to Kigali, Rwanda as acting Ambassador. Rwanda was delightful before the genocide and the family became friends with Diane Fosse. Idi Amin came for a visit dressed as a field marshal with a detail of female guards.

(cont'd, next page)

2011-12 Officers and Directors

Officers

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

•Non-Voting

Avenues of Service

Club Service

Director	Terry Schaeffer
Assistant Director	Dan Holmes

Community Service

Director	Curtis Cormane
Assistant Director	Nanci Cone

International Service

Director	Mario de la Piedra
Assistant Director	Ed McCombs

New Generations

Director	Ellyn Dembowski
Assistant	Ken Cooper

Vocational Service

Director	Bill Finley
Assistant	Todd Binkley

CHECK THIS OUT!

Thank you John Brant for our new website for the Literacy Ride! We need a lot of riders to have a successful event. Please direct all those cyclists you know, from casual to novice to expert, to go to the website and sign up for the ride! And then join us on the day of the ride to cheer them on as a volunteer!

www.goldcoastrideforliteracy.com

UPCOMING EVENTS

Board Meeting

71 Palm
Mar 15, 2012 11:45 AM

Saint Patrick's Day Parade- **JOIN US!**

Downtown Ventura
Mar 17, 2012 09:00 AM



Newcomers

Crowne Plaza Hotel
Mar 23, 2012 07:30 AM

Basic PRLS- **MORE INFO AT www.prls.org/**

CLU Oxnard (before District Assembly)
March 30, 2012

Rotary District 5240 Assembly

Pacifica High School Oxnard
Mar 31, 2012 08:00 AM

Blood Drive- **RESCHEDULED!**

Derby Club Parking Lot
Apr 11, 2012 10:00 AM

RYLA

Camp Ramah, Ojai
Apr 19, 2012 - Apr 22, 2012

Gold Coast Ride for Literacy- **NEED VOLUNTEERS!**

Apr 28, 2012 06:00 AM



- Home
- About Us
- Routes / Registration
- Testimonials
- Sponsors



Join us for the 8th Gold Coast Ride for Literacy
Saturday April 28, 2012
Start time 6:00 am
Course will be open until Sunset.



We have five routes for you to choose from:

- **10 Mile Family Ride**- along the bike path for a safe ride to Foster Park.
- **30 Mile Fun Ride** up the coast to Rincon Point and return.



- **Metric Century** with a more challenging mountain route returning along the coast to enjoy views of the Channel Islands.
- **Full Century**- Leaving Ventura you will venture into the mountains behind Ojai, where you will enjoy a view of Ventura County from 3,500'. Then around Lake Casitas to Montecito, and a return along the scenic coast enjoying views of the Channel Islands on your return to Ventura.



Looking out to Ventura County from Rose Valley

- **Double Metric Century**- for those looking for a bigger challenge, add another loop to Upper Ojai, before you join the Century Route.

Sign up early to receive a free goodie bag to the first 100 entrants.

Stay for the after-party with food, music, and the good times you will bring.



Program (cont'd)

In 1977, the family returned to DC for the first time in 10 years. He attended the Nat'l War College for one year. He was next sent to in Auckland NZ as Counsel General, which he considers his favorite posting. There was a close U.S. relationship, although in 1980's there were problems re: U.S. ships and whether they were carrying nuclear weapons. During this period he also administered Western Samoa.

1984 he became Department Chief in Singapore. His last posting was to Melbourne, Australia as Counsel General. Peter said he and his family realized they had become foreigners in their land. The decision was made to retire to Oxnard with a pledge of no tuxedos or cocktail parties. Home, concluded our fascinating speaker, there's no place like it!