



ROTARY SPOKES

Rotary Club of Ventura

Est. May 1, 1919

"The Friendliest Club in Rotary"

May 19, 2024

PACIFIC HIGH SCHOOL PROM



Randy creating the Enchanted Forest prom theme

Members of the Rotary Club of Ventura helped make the Pacific High School Prom a success. The prom was held the evening of May 17 at the Poinsettia Pavilion. Randy Encinas volunteered as photographer for the students attending, and club members provided desserts. Pacific High Interact donated \$1,000 of their funds to offset the cost of prom tickets so all students who wanted to attend were able to do so. Thanks to Madhu for organizing our participation and to all who volunteered to make this evening special! *(Photos by Madhu Bajaj)*



Volunteers RoseAnn and David



Randy with teachers and staff

PROGRAM: MEMBERS' TRAVELS

At our May 15 meeting, members showed a favorite travel photograph and described how it was meaningful, in two minutes or less. (Madhu had a stopwatch!) Our members are not only well traveled, but have had some fascinating experiences! We also took a couple of breaks to discuss thought-provoking travel questions at our tables.

Sandy Lassila: Described an arduous hike climbing **Machu Picchu** in Peru, comparing her time to the more swift-footed Kristin Taylor.

RoseAnn Hill: **Convict Lake**, Calif. is one of her favorite spots, along with the Bodie ghost town and other places along US 395.

Madhu Bajaj: Saw a group of **monkeys** during a trip to **India**—each went up to a water tap, turned it on, drank, and turned it off, including a baby monkey.

Mike Schwartz: During a tour of **China** in 1982, other tour group members and I responded to crowds of curious people by singing The Alphabet Song and other American favorites.



Brenda Allison-Hutchinson: A Rotary trip to **India** immunizing children against polio was one of the most meaningful experiences of her life.

Andrea Contarino: A multi-nation trek included an overnight trip on **camelback**.

Ken Leandro: Discussed his employment in the Eastern Caribbean, and scuba diving with turtles off the Big Island of **Hawai'i**.

Neal Lassila: Traveled from island to island on a luxurious 42 foot catamaran, including **Bora-Bora**.

Dan Holmes: Jerome the Bushman taught him about bushman life in **Namibia, Africa**.

Margi Wray: Observed the **wombats of Tasmania**. They are fascinating creatures with a cartilage plate to protect their rear ends, and they poop up to 100 cube-shaped pellets a day.

Betsy Chess: Among her favorite destinations is **Hood River, Oregon**, to “travel to renew” and visit her 3 ½ year-old granddaughter.

Kristin Taylor: Has visited 134 countries, but loves the 7 million tulips growing in **Keukenhof Gardens, Netherlands**.

HAPPY BIRTHDAY!
Betsy Chess – May 24

HAPPY ROTARY ANNIVERSARY!
Indy Batra – 19 years



MEETING MAY 15, 2024

Attendance: 22 members and 2 guests: Carston Buck (from Greg Rentals) and Raymond Flores (NY Life).

Lunch: Italian sweet sausage sandwiches with roasted peppers, roasted potatoes, fruit, salad including bacon-wrapped cheese and other fixin's, ice cream with bananas and strawberries.



Councilman Doug Halter started the pre-meeting at 12:20 p.m. with city highlights:

- The Strawberry Festival is this weekend. Using what we learned from the X Games, the parking situation will be improved.
- The X Games will be June 28-30.
- The city received a \$5 million grant to help connect us to state water. Doug went to Washington, DC to advocate for the project.
- A \$20 million project to update the city's information technology is in progress.
- Doug's proposal to streamline building permits was approved with an easier process for smaller projects. The goal is 60 percent of permits will be issued over the counter.
- An upcoming online ability to make appointments with city staff.
- The general plan update is still in progress.
- The pier repairs are underway, and the pier may reopen ahead of schedule.

Flag salute/introductions: **Kristin Taylor** shared a plaque seen at Ventura High School that lists the eight "habits of mind" for success in school: curiosity, openness, engagement, creativity, persistence, responsibility, flexibility, and metacognition.

Song: **RoseAnn and Clyde:** "God Bless America."

Announcements:

Neal—(1) We are making good progress in getting sponsors for the **Fireworks** event.

(2) The Club Assembly will be held in early July after the board member retreat formulates proposals. We will discuss ideas including increasing our membership.

Kristin—The Salvation Army Mobile Clothing Unit will be collecting clothing donations at our meetings the third Wednesday of each month. Donations will benefit farm families and others in need.

Madhu—(1) Thank you to all who participated in the **Pacific High School Teacher Appreciation Lunch**. The teachers appreciated the Thai food and homemade desserts and gifts, but were particularly touched by the handwritten notes of appreciation.

(2) **The Ventura Adult and Continuing Education (VACE)** is a “hidden gem” anyone can attend to receive a high school diploma, training for a number of careers, and more. Our evening meeting May 29 will be at their offices—RSVP now!

Brenda—(1) You can pay your **monthly fees bill** online with a credit card, and no human being sees the number.

(2) We are receiving **Fireworks sponsorships**, including \$2,500 from Bill Kearney.

(3) **Fireworks volunteers** are needed. Recruit your visiting friends and family! Brenda would appreciate one or two members to help her coordinate volunteers.

Happy Dollars.

UPCOMING EVENTS



May 22 lunch meeting: Perspectives on Peace awards lunch. Presentation of scholarship awards to high school seniors with winning entries in the Perspectives on Peace arts competition.

May 23: Board Meeting, Crowne Plaza Hotel, 12:00-1:30 p.m.

May 29: NO LUNCH MEETING. EVENING MEETING at Ventura Adult & Continuing Education, 5200 Valentine Road, Ventura, 5:30 to 7:30 p.m. VACE prepares diverse learners with academic, vocational, and technological competencies for the global workforce. They offer incredible training programs under “Careers in Under a Year” with high rates of job placement upon completion. Dinner included for Club members. Guests and children are welcome to attend, \$20. Ample parking. Wear comfortable shoes for tour. RSVP to Madhu by May 26.

June 5 lunch meeting: Meet Julius Gius Memorial Rotary Foundation (JGMRF) grant recipients.

June 10: Pacific High Graduation Brunch, 9:00 – 11:30 a.m., 501 College Dr., Ventura. Honor the graduating students from this Model Continuation School.

June 12 lunch meeting: County Supervisor Matt LaVere and Dan Parziale, executive director of Mesa Farm housing non-profit.

June 18: Step-Down Dinner. This year’s theme is “Living Life Like a Song.” Since Neal’s favorite musician is Jimmy Buffett, we are welcoming you all to our Tiki Bar in our own “Margaritaville” at the Water’s Edge Restaurant and Bar at the Harbor. Knowing that Neal will be President for another year, we decided to make this gathering less formal. Dress will be casual—think flip flops and Hawaiian shirts. Let’s take time to celebrate and thank Neal for this year and root him on for 2024-25. Please RSVP to Margi as soon as possible with the number attending.