



ROTARY SPOKES

Rotary Club of Ventura

Est. May 1, 1919

"The Friendliest Club in Rotary"

November 12, 2023

VETERANS DAY



We had a special program honoring veterans at our November 8 meeting. Big thanks to **Joslynn Skelton** for putting the program together!

We had a large attendance of **53 members and guests**. It was great to see **John Brant** at the meeting! Guests included Joslynn's husband Andrew, her parents Jan and Alfredo, her best friend's mom Susan, and a number of **veterans**.

Naval Base Ventura County presented the colors. We enjoyed a beautiful and rousing rendition of our **national anthem** by Navy veteran **Susie Hicks**.

We participated in **Operation Green Light** with green lights on the tables in support of veterans.





We enjoyed a **delicious lunch** of fried chicken, corn casserole, mashed potatoes, green salad, fruit, and apple pie for dessert. It doesn't get more American than that!

During the meal, a PowerPoint presentation featured photographs of club members' **family members who served in the military.**



Announcements:

Sheila Fattarelli's obituary appeared in the Nov. 6 *Ventura County Star*. A celebration of life will be 10:00 a.m., Saturday, Dec. 6, at St. Paul's Episcopal Church in Ventura.

Neal Lassila: We are sorry to learn that **Aaron Campbell** is leaving the club and moving to Los Angeles, where he will be working for the Braille Institute. Much success in your new endeavor!

Madhu Bajaj: (1) Committee to discuss future Club Services activities is meeting Tuesday, Nov. 14, 5:45 p.m., at The Cave, 4435 McGrath St., Unit 301, Ventura.

(2) Holiday Social (Dec. 1): Please RSVP. You will be entered in a raffle for nifty prizes if you RSVP by 11/15. (More info below in Upcoming Events)

Kristin Taylor: Coats for Kids collection boxes are ready to be placed at the collection sites by those who signed up. Kristin has the boxes and packets. Thanks to **Saurabh Bajaj** for printing the posters and labels!

Judy Moore: Seeking volunteers to work at the **Westside Holiday Event.**

Happy Dollars.

Program: Joslynn Skelton began our program honoring the 37,000 veterans in Ventura County by playing a medley of Armed Forces songs.¹ Each veteran present was recognized by standing and giving their branch of service.



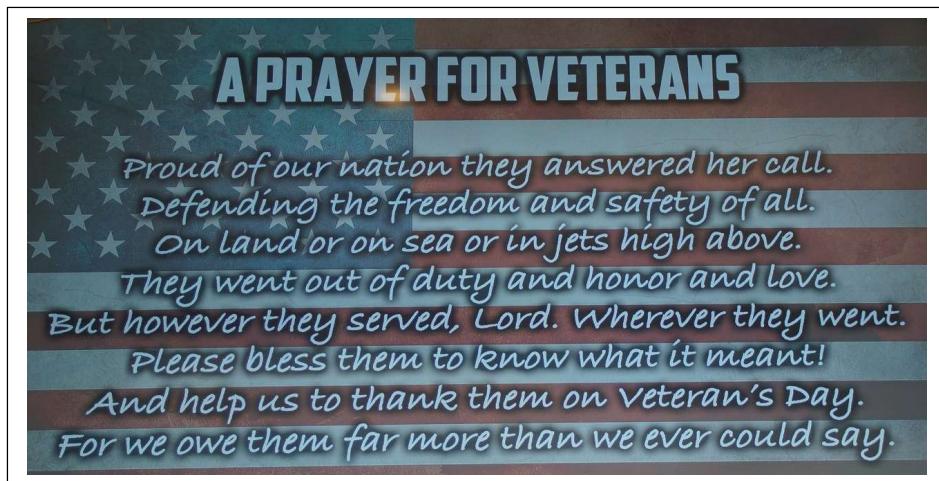
Will Ray, Jr. of the Ventura Chapter of Disabled American Veterans (DAV) discussed the challenges and long delays many veterans have faced to receive services from the Veterans Administration. The DAV is the largest veterans service organization in the world and helps veterans with their claims. They also fight for legislation every year to receive adequate compensation. Any veteran, whether disabled or not, can join DAV. Every veteran who ever served the U.S. has

sacrificed their life in the service of our county—some instantaneously, others over their lifetimes. That sacrifice is made for the betterment of our country.

Charles Foote, also of DAV Ventura, discussed the importance of veterans signing up for VA services, even if they don't need services now, so Congress will more fully fund VA services.

Susie Hicks discussed her personal journey as a veteran, and the importance of singing in that journey.

We ended with a **Prayer for Veterans**, and with our gratitude for their service.



¹ **Bonus information:** “The Army Goes Rolling Along” was adapted from “The Caissons Go Rolling Along,” written in 1908 by Brigadier General Edmund “Snitz” Gruber, and adapted into a march by John Philip Sousa. “Anchors Aweigh” was first played at the Army-Navy football game in 1906 (the Navy won 10-0). “The Marines’ Hymn” was updated in 1942 to change “On the land as on the sea” to “In the air, on land, and sea” to acknowledge the important role of aviation in the Corps. The final line of the “U.S. Air Force Song” was changed in 1947 from “Nothing’ll stop the Army Air Corps” to “Nothing’ll stop the U.S. Air Force.” Unfortunately, “Corps” does not rhyme with “roar” or “soar” in preceding lines, but the change was necessary when the USAF became a separate branch of service. The U.S. Coast Guard song “Semper Paratus” (Always Ready) is named for the USCG motto.

UPCOMING EVENTS

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

PLEASE NOTE TWO CHANGES FROM THE PREVIOUS NEWSLETTER

Next meeting's Conversations in Rotary will be with **President Elect George Poulakos** and **Rena Sepulveda**.

The **Board meeting** will be **Nov. 30**, not Nov. 16.

Nov. 13 Salvation Army Kettle Kick-off Luncheon, 11:30 a.m. to 1:00 p.m., 650 Petit Ave., Ventura. No charge. Help celebrate the beginning of the bell ringing season! Hosted by Jennifer Caldwell (Chief Development Officer of FoodShare). Guest Speaker District Attorney Erik Nasarenko. Lunch, recognitions, silent auction. RSVP to Chris Brashears by email or text by Nov. 6.

Nov. 14 Club Services meeting, 5:45 p.m., The Cave, 4435 McGrath St., Unit 301, Ventura.

Nov. 15 lunch meeting: Conversations in Rotary: President Elect George Poulakos and club member **Rena Sepulveda** will be interviewed by **Lynda Girtsman**.



George Poulakos has been a Rotarian for 10 years and has been in three Rotary clubs (Fort Lauderdale, Taos and Ventura). He is currently serving as chair of the district grants committee for District 5240. In 2024/25, he will be our club president and will also serve as International Service Chair for the district.

George is the project lead on an economic development global grant project in Zambia. He has volunteered for Rotary projects in Guatemala, Zambia and Greece. He has also done non-Rotary projects in South Africa, Tanzania, and Greece as well as ongoing volunteer work for a rare disease community in the US. His classification is advertising and he is a PH +8.

Rena Sepulveda joined our club in August. She has dedicated most of her professional life to housing, particularly affordable housing for vulnerable populations. She has worked for Turning Point Foundation since October 2015. She is currently the Director of Contracts and Grants. Turning Point Foundation specializes in community based mental health services and housing for persons with mental health challenges. It works with clients to reverse the devastating effects of their illnesses, such as job loss, homelessness, isolation, addiction, incarceration, and thoughts of suicide. Assisting those with the day-to-day challenges of recovery of their mental health and transitioning from homelessness.



Prior to her experience at Turning Point Foundation, Rena was at Cabrillo Economic Development Corporation (CEDC) for five years. At CEDC, Rena gained experience in many

facets of affordable housing, community building and engagement and organizational development. Rena has a B.A. in Political Science and Sociology from the University of California, Berkeley. Rena has been on the Ventura County Housing Opportunities Made Easier Board since 2013, serving as Treasurer for six years and Chair for two years. Rena serves as Treasurer of the Ventura County Medical Center Community Health Care Board. She has served on this board since 2017. She also serves on the board of small start-up non-profit, Stairway to Recovery.

Nov. 17 Santa Paula Rotary Club Celebration, 5:30-9:00 p.m., Palazzio Events Center, 814 E. Main St., Santa Paula. For more information and to purchase tickets: <https://santapaularotary.org/events/celebrating-100-years-of-service/>

Nov. 22 NO MEETING THIS WEEK

Nov. 23 HAPPY THANKSGIVING!

Nov. 29 lunch meeting: Ben Rode and Nancy O'Rode with Ondulando Firewise

Nov. 30 Board Meeting, Crowne Plaza Hotel, 12:00 to 1:30 p.m.

Dec. 1 Holiday Social for members and their guest. 6:00-9:00 p.m., Bright Spark Brewing, 4561 Market St., Ventura. Dinner will be served. No host bar with delicious beers, wines, and nonalcoholic beverages. And some fun surprises! If you have allergies, or special food needs, please RSVP early so we can make the proper arrangements. We invite you to bring a dessert to share, or participate in the Great Rotarian Bake Off. No children please. RSVP to Madhu Bajaj. RSVP before Nov. 15 to be entered in a raffle for some lovely prizes.

Dec. 6 lunch meeting: Ventura City Manager Bill Ayub

Dec. 9: Salvation Army Kettle Bellringing. Contact Chris Brashears to volunteer.

Dec. 9: Decorate Rotary Rose Parade Float, 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m., Irwindale, CA. Contact Madhu Bajaj.

Dec. 13 lunch meeting: Pacific High School Interact presentation (not fundraising)

Dec. 16: Westside Holiday Event, Arise Ventura Church

CELEBRATING CLUB ANNIVERSARIES

Mark Sauer
28 years

RoseAnn Hill
16 years

Jessica Brandon
2 years

HAPPY BIRTHDAY!

Neal Lassila
November 11