



ROTARY SPOKES

Rotary Club of Ventura

Est. May 1, 1919

“The Friendliest Club in Rotary”

September 25, 2022

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITY IN GUATEMALA



Ak' Tenamit: A Mayan Term Meaning “New Village”

Ak' Tenamit was started in 1990, with a first class of 11 boys and 3 girls. It was founded by Steve Dudenhoefer from Florida, who remains today as the Chief Technical Advisor of Asociación Ak' Tenamit. The school today has over 600 Indigenous Mayan students and is managed entirely by the Q'eqchi people. It is viewed as a model globally for its effective grassroots approach to vocational education, income generation, and health care. The goals of Ak' Tenamit are to:

- Provide shelter and education for at-risk youth aged 12-18
- Help youths develop skills and gainful employment
- Establish internships and job opportunities
- Provide initial financial and emotional support for graduates to help ensure success

Hands-on experiences provide the knowledge and skills for gainful employment in Guatemala, which offers an alternative to migration. An outstanding number (85%) of students are employed shortly after graduation. This is because prior to graduation, students complete extensive work study programs in businesses off-campus. After employment, graduates pledge to give back a percentage of their income to their villages.

Rotarians have been huge supporters of Ak' Tenamit for over 20 years, contributing medical supplies and equipment, funds, and labor to build new dorms and classrooms, a floating dental clinic, solar energy equipment, computer labs, restaurant equipment and supplies, new boat engines, and family water filters.

Each year, groups of Rotarians from all over the USA spend a week at Ak' Tenamit to gain an understanding of the need of the children, and to provide assistance at the school. We are now recruiting Rotarians and friends for a trip March 25 to April 2, 2023. Please see attached flyer.

“The best way to find yourself is to lose yourself in the service of others.” Mahatma Gandhi

For information, contact George Poulakos

Flier: <https://clubrunner.blob.core.windows.net/00000002868/en-ca/files/homepage/guatemala-flier/Guatemala-flier.pdf>

MEETING SEPTEMBER 21, 2022

Attendance—About 43 members and guests plus one via Zoom.

Lunch—Extensive salad bar; beef in sauce with noodles. (It was like Beef Stroganoff, but without the dairy. Maybe this wasn't the right time to serve a dish named after a Russian nobleman.) Apple pie al la mode for dessert. (It doesn't get more American than that!)

Flag salute (after Rob found a flag), **inspirational message, and introductions**—**Anup Rimal**. “Karma means ultimate responsibility. You even take responsibility for your very Birth and Death.” (Sadhguru)

Songleaders—**Jessica Brandon** and **RoseAnn Hill**—“Let There Be Peace on Earth”

Announcement:

Jessica Brandon—**World Polio Day** is Sunday, October 23. She is seeking donations of “favorite things” baskets to auction off.

Happy Dollars:

Sandy Lassila—She and Neal just returned from a trip, complete with wine tasting and axe throwing (in that order!).

Betsy Chess—She will be featured giving a history of Limoneira lemons on an Alison Roman CNN cooking and travel show, to air in spring 2023.

Dan Holmes—Just returned from a 2,000 mile Alaska road trip, featuring the northern lights and very friendly First Nations inhabitants.

Abiel Acosta—Has completed his move to Moorpark.

Greg and Margi Wray—Their daughter has just turned 40, with a new grandchild.

Anne King—Her son just celebrated his 22nd birthday.

Brenda Allison-Hutchinson—Urges members to go on the Guatemala trip. (See page 1)

Fining—**Ken Leandro** quizzed us about the NFL. (Luckily he didn't call on me because I don't know anything about football. If you don't either, check out the classic Andy Griffith bit, “What It Was, Was Football” <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oNxLxTZHKM8> .)

We all make entreaties to our Higher Power and so....

I asked for strength and was given difficulties to make me strong.

I asked for wisdom and was given problems to solve.

I asked for prosperity and was given brawn and brain to work

I asked for courage and was given dangers to overcome

I asked for patience and was given situations where I was forced to wait.

I asked for love and was given troubled people to help.

I asked for favors and was given opportunities.

I received nothing I wanted and everything I needed

My asks have been answered.

-Mary Saputo's invocation 9/14/22



Hutch presents Tammie Helmuth with the Major Donor Award in honor of her contribution of \$10,000 to the Rotary Foundation



Hutch presents Neal and Sandy Lassila with Benefactor Awards in honor of their pledge to bequest \$1,000 to the Rotary Foundation



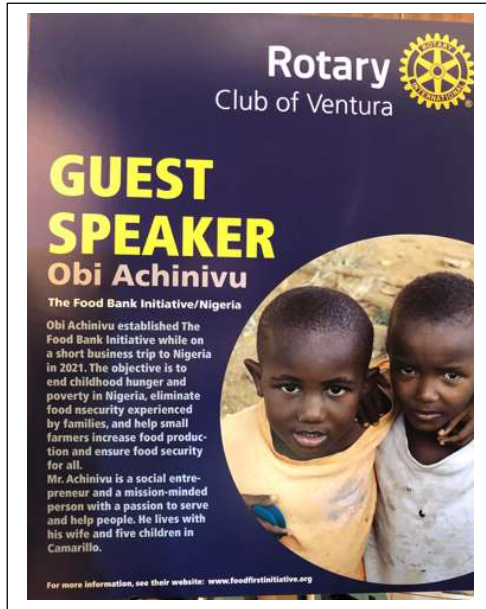
Ken Leandro receives Paul Harris pin plus 2, and Neal Lassila receives his Paul Harris pin plus 1, in honor of their extraordinary service organizing this year's Fireworks event



Welcome to Linda Hewett, inducted as our newest member

Congratulations to Joslynn Skelton and Aaron Campbell, who have been appointed as members of the club's Board of Directors

PROGRAM—OBI ACHINIVU



Mr. Obi Achinivu gave a presentation at our September 21, 2002, meeting. He grew up poor in Nigeria, but the level of poverty he saw in a visit there last year was mind-blowing. He was first inspired to establish The Food Bank Initiative when he was at a grocery store. A man there wanted to buy a bag of rice to feed his family, but was unable to pay because the price had gone up from 50 cents to 90 cents. Only 40 cents made the difference between the family eating or not. Fourteen million Nigerian children face hunger. Many Nigerians are unable to afford \$5 for lifesaving antibiotics. People die from malaria and waterborne illnesses because they cannot afford treatment for these preventable deaths. His goals are to end childhood hunger in Africa, and to help farmers increase production through natural processes that avoid toxic chemicals that get into the rivers where people drink.

Mr. Achinivu recognizes the contributions of Rotary around the world with water, education, and health. Our members leave work or home to come to meetings because we know we have a role and can make an impact. We cannot help everyone, but we must do what we can. The worst thing is to do nothing.

For more information and to donate, go to: www.foodfirstinitiative.org

UPCOMING EVENTS

(For up-to-date and more complete information, see our web site, VenturaRotary.org.)

September 28 lunch meeting: Sarah Adams, Love VC. The focus of this 501(c)3 non-profit is inspiring our community to love each other through connecting, giving and serving. The Team is made up of 100% volunteers working to make our community a more vibrant and unified place to live, work, and play.

October 5 lunch meeting: Presentation by Maria Ventura, Southern California Gas Company.

October 12 lunch meeting: Presentation by Brian Benel, Ojai Storytellers Festival.

October 17: Meet a Rotarian. Meet members of our newest Interact Club at **Pacific High School**, tour the school, and learn about PHS and its students. 8:45 to 10:45 a.m. Space is limited—contact Madhu Bajaj for more information and to RSVP.

October 24: World Polio Day.