

THE GOLDEN rotarian

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LA JOLLA GOLDEN TRIANGLE ROTARY CLUB'S NEWSLETTER

SEPTEMBER 5 2025



FRANK URTASUN PORT OF SAN DIEGO BOARD OF PORT COMMISSIONERS

PORT OF SAN DIEGO UPDATE: WHAT'S NEW ON THE WATERFRONT



RI President 2025-26
FRANCESCO AREZZO

District 5340 Governor 2025-26
LUIS R. CARRANZA

LJGT Rotary President 2025-26
DAVID CHONG

AOS MEETINGS AND SOCIAL EVENTS

1st Friday of the Month.....Community Services Committee
(follows club meeting)

2nd Friday of the Month..... International Services Committee
(follows club meeting)

3rd Friday of the Month..... Youth Services Committee
(follows club meeting)

4th Friday of the Month.....Peace Committee
(follows club meeting)



Francisco "Frank" Urtasun returned to the Port of San Diego's Board of Port Commissioners in 2022 as an appointee of the City of Coronado. Previously, he served as a Commissioner from 1992-2002 as an appointee the City of Imperial Beach. He is the first Commissioner in the history of the Port to be appointed by two different member cities.

Commissioner Urtasun is also the former president of Regional Strategies Group (RSG), a San Diego-based public affairs and strategic communications consulting firm. Prior to the establishment of RSG, he was the regional vice president of External Relations for Sempra Energy Services Corporation, a business unit of Sempra Energy. Sempra Energy is a San Diego-based Fortune 500 energy services holding company whose subsidiaries provide electricity, natural gas and value-added products and services. Over the course of his 38-year career at Sempra Energy, Commissioner Urtasun held several senior level management positions.

Prior to joining SDG&E, Commissioner Urtasun began his career in the real estate industry, focusing on buying, entitling, and constructing his own single and multi-family residential projects. Today, he also manages Southwesterly Properties, which owns and operates single and multi-family properties throughout Southern San Diego County.

Throughout his career, Commissioner Urtasun has served on numerous local community boards, including: chairman of San Diego Housing Commission, 2017 – 2019; chairman of San Diego Downtown Partnership, 2015 – 2016; chairman and Commissioner of the Port of San Diego Board of Port Commissioners, 1992 – 2002; Local Initiatives Support Corporation, 2015 – 2019; board member and awardee of the San Diego Regional Chamber of Commerce's "Ten Lifetime San Diegans," 2007.

Urtasun holds a bachelor's degree from San Diego State University and was recognized as an Outstanding Alumni and the President's Honorary Degree from Southwestern College. He and his wife, Caren, have two adult children and two grandchildren.





REPORT

from the last meeting



UPCOMING SPEAKERS



2025

SEPTEMBER - SPEAKER

19.....Dr. Divya Kakaiya
Safer and Peaceful Communities

OCTOBER - SPEAKER

3.....Dr. Benjamin Smarr
UCSD Halicioglu Data Science

17.....Scott Lewis
Editor, Voice of San Diego

President David Chong called the meeting to order and welcomed everyone to the Most Dynamic Rotary Club in the World!

ROTARIAN OF THE DAY

The meeting began with the Rotarian of the Day, **Brett Cattell**, sharing his journey from traditional work to a digital nomad lifestyle, emphasizing personal and professional growth. Brett's "a-ha" moments of "You can do that?" led him to working remotely in inspiring locations, such as a butterfly avery, next to waterfalls, or leading a status update call from a canoe in the Everglades while watching manatees and alligators. Brett's storyteller style revealed life lessons of finding balance, creating space for joy and adventure, prioritizing community and relationships, and building a life he loves. A newlywed, Brett engaged his fellow Rotarians by having them guess how he proposed to Cami. Only to declare, "Hey, why do one epic proposal when you can do five?" Closing his time with a playful dichotomy of photos of him with a pretty intense beard and at a Taylor Swift concert.

GUESTS

Many guests were introduced, including saying hello to Rotarians on Zoom.

- **Cami & Brett** brought Cami's parents, **Ralph & Larain**, sister **Kelli** and friend **Michele**.
- **Leanne** and **Jan** brought their daughter
- **Rajan** welcomed **Kit**
- **Steven** welcomed his lovely wife, **Magenta**, and travel friend **Heather**

ACTION ITEMS

- Follow up with **Rick Clark** regarding **Nilsa's** recovery from her fall and broken arm.
- Make payments to **Ron Kohl** for the Ensenada trip scheduled for October 4-5. Be sure your passports are up-to-date.

SPEAKER OF THE DAY:

Retired Captain **Mike Holden** introduced Chief of Police **Scott Wahl** as kind, tough, and precisely the type of person we want protecting the public. The LJGT Rotary has a long-standing, deep relationship with law enforcement.

Mike shared that the LJGT has made a meaningful impact on the police station, saying, *"It feels good to bring families to the renovated station; it is great for morale."* It was very inspiring to hear about the new police chief, Scott. "He has moved the police station forward more in the last year than in the last 5 years."

Chief of Police Scott grew up in Clairemont; his father was an SD police officer. He spoke candidly about the challenges of managing a \$700 million budget, 2500 employees, and his vision moving forward. *"We have been known for our community policing efforts. Our previous efforts have run their course. We are now focused on relationships. We did a complete reorganization. I need someone who is both kind and tough. We manage lots of bureaucracy. We established a Chief Operations Officer."* Some highlights were hearing him discuss how police training emphasizes that relationships are more critical than an arrest or getting a gun off the street. It's essential to understand the difference. If we are incentivizing arrests but not placing value on

the relationships, then over time, officers forget what it feels like to be on the other side of handcuffs. Scott shared a story of a close family member who was taken out of a car and put in handcuffs but was released and how this shaped his perspective. Providing the public with the highest quality service that is second-to-none is his mission.

By incentivizing relationships, we can teach frontline police work, build trust in the community, do God's work every day, guide young police officers to be inspiring leaders, and deliver an efficient and effective org that is fiscally responsible.

Chief Scott spoke candidly about the budget, how to make unconventional moves to do more during high-volume times. He shared about the low numbers of gang homicides in San Diego. In San Diego, we had three gang-related deaths, which is very low. Police now send a mediator first when there is a gang conflict before sending police officers. Professional counseling, community members who have been there to steer kids onto a better path. We are the safest large city in the US. Community and partnership funding have made a significant difference.

The Police Department is leaning on technology to do some of the heavy lifting. He shared his experience of working with the homeless to address mental health and addiction, influencing people to make a decision to get help, which forces people to get in jail for a few hours, and then they are directed to help. It was an exceptional morning.

~Reporter

Cami Eiskamp

PHOTOS FROM LAST MEETING



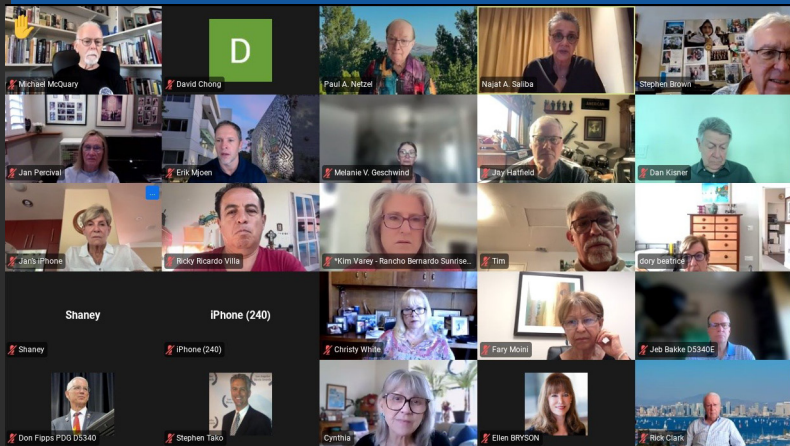
International zoom mtg with Lebanese Parliament member Najat Aoun Saliba

We launched our first International Zoom meeting launched with special guest Najat Aoun Saliba, an extraordinary academic, scientist, humanitarian and an elected member of the Lebanese Parliament. Najat's presentation was unvarnished and forthright - in addition to her incredible personal story, she shared the challenges and opportunities that Lebanon currently faces. We were truly humbled and overwhelmed by her intelligence and grace.

Thanks to the 38 participants in this zoom and please mark your calendar for our next International Zoom on Thursday, Oct. 23 at 7:30; our topic is Israel and our speaker is Russ Roberts, one of Stanford's Hoover Fellows and currently president of Shalom College in Jerusalem.

Here is the note we received from Najat following our meeting on August 29:

I want to sincerely thank you for taking the time to organize and attend the Zoom meeting. I'm grateful for the chance to share my voice — not for personal gain, but out of a deep belief in justice for the commons.



In a world full of noise and competing interests, it feels even more important to lift up the voices that care for the good of all. I hope that together, we can keep amplifying those voices and remind each other of what truly matters: fairness, dignity, and our shared responsibility toward one another.

La Jolla Golden Triangle
ROTARY CLUB
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LJGT ROTARY LEADERSHIP 2025 - 2026

PRESIDENT David Chong
 VICE PRESIDENT Christy White Brook
 PRESIDENT ELECT (2026-27) Timothy Fronczek
 TREASURER Sharon Council
 SECRETARY Lisa Galstian
 PAST-PRESIDENT Luke Ervin

**ROTARIAN
 OF THE DAY**



**RICKY
 RICARDO**

Founder of Casa Sur Hacienda | Community Builder | Educator | Arts & Culture Advocate

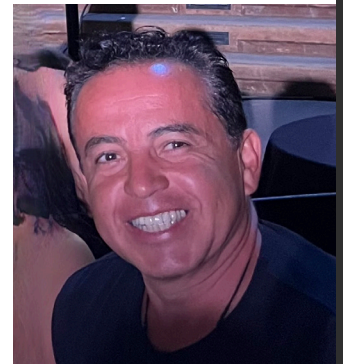
Ricky Ricardo Villa is the visionary founder of **Casa Sur Hacienda**, a unique event and community space in San Diego's South Bay, dedicated to fostering collaboration, creativity, and social impact.

Originally from Mexico City, Ricky holds a bachelor's degree in Mass Media Arts and has worked with prestigious organizations including the *Consejo Nacional para la Cultura y las Artes* and *Radio Educación*. He also contributed to the Broadway and Show Business industry before embarking on a 20-year career in New York City, where he worked with institutions such as HSBC Bank, Prudential Financial, Re/Max Today, New York University, and performed as a Latin & Ballroom dancer at the **Lincoln Center Midsummer Festival**.

Ricky later earned a master's degree in Bilingual, General, and Special Childhood Education and served as a Case Manager and Special Education Teacher within both the New York City Public School system and private institutions.

Now based in Southern California, Ricky curates and co-produces community gatherings, retreats, business networking events, and artist residencies. He actively supports nonprofit organizations with fundraising, workshops, community outreach campaigns, and private events.

A proud member of the **La Jolla Golden Triangle Rotary Club**, Ricky is also part of **BNI La Mesa**, the **Chula Vista & National City Chambers of Commerce**, and the **Corazón de Vida San Diego Chapter**. Outside his professional work, he enjoys open water swimming at La Jolla Shores, coastal road biking, and daily practice at **CorePower Yoga**.



SEPTEMBER 2025

September 19 - Dan Kisner

OCTOBER 2025

October 3 - Dory Beatrice

October 17 - Stephen Tako



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