

The Orange Peel

2025-2026 | President Deanna Maddock | Show up, Give back, Get things done, and Have fun!

Next Meeting Friday, Nov 21, 2025

Speaker - Jenn Gustafson -
Teen Council, Supply
Closets, Casa Cheer.

Greeters - Phyllis
Macdonald

Invocation - Audrey Smith-
Wiberg

Vocation - Licia Green

Prospector - Bill Wagner

Raffle tickets - Patty Wolf

The Four-Way Test

Is it the TRUTH?

**Is it FAIR to All
Concerned?**

**Will it build GOOD
WILL and BETTER
FRIENDSHIPS?**

**Will it be BENEFICIAL
to all concerned?**

Citrus Heights Chamber of Commerce



Sheri Merrick is the executive director of the Citrus Heights Chamber of Commerce. She started her career with Medical Alert (allergy bracelets) when she lived in Turlock. After

that, she open and ran a dance studio for five years.

Sheri moved to Citrus Heights and started managing dental practices and small businesses. Citrus Heights was the first Chamber of Commerce that she joined 16 years ago. At the time she was a single mother of two boys. (Today she lives in Orangevale.)

She joined five other Chambers in the ares and that is how she got engrossed in the Chamber world. The Folsom Chamber asked her to help run the Rodeo one summer. The Folsom Chamber contracted with her to be the Folsom Ambassador

Recap of the Meeting Nov 14, 2025

Guests

Sheri Merrick - Citrus Heights Chamber of Commerce

Jean Hill - Jim Buntin's sister visiting from Oklahoma

Derek Maldonado - President Deanna's main squeeze

Visiting Rotarians

None

District 5180 Governor

Megan Ellinghouse
2025-2026

Rotary International President 2025-2026

Francesco Arezzo

The 2025-2026 Rotary International presidential theme is **"Unite For Good"**

Chair for two years. That is when she really learned how to run a Chamber of Commerce.

Sheri was the Chief Operating Officer for the Folsom Chamber and managed their budget. All the while, she kept her eye on the Citrus Heights Chamber of Commerce.

An Executive Director position opened up with the Citrus Heights Chamber and she really wanted the position. She wanted to take all the knowledge she learned in Folsom and apply it to Citrus Heights. Sheri was offered the position and started work in March 2024. She inherited a budget of \$8k and has grown it to \$23K. She has one employee.

Sheri felt that the Citrus Height Chamber was stuck in the past. She had the website updated and added additional benefits for the members. For example, the members can now have a "mini" website under the umbrella of the CH Chamber's website with the information about their business.

Sheri recapped what has changed since she became the Executive Director. In 2024, 84 new members joined (80% increase) and so far this year, another 90 have joined (5% increase). She is helping to get the word out about these businesses.

The Chamber was located on the second floor of a building and that made the Chamber hard to find. She moved the Chamber office to Greenback and Fair Oaks Boulevard, near Sacramento Black Rifle, for more visibility.

Since the Chamber moved into the shopping center, more tenants have moved into the same center. The center has been cleaned up and

homeless have been discouraged from living there. The proactive work of the Chamber has made the tenants feel safer.

The Chamber has several programs throughout the year which are shown in the weekly newsletter. There was luncheons with community leaders as the speakers, evening mixers on Tuesday evenings, ribbon cuttings, Government Affairs Committee meetings and Continuing Strategic Partnerships. The SQUEEZE of the Week is a weekly highlight of a Chamber business member through the Chamber's social media and in the newsletter. The Leadership Citrus Heights has 15 enrollees from all walks of life who work on class projects.

In March there are Community Awards Dinner to recognize the Firefighter of the year, Police of the year, Business of the year, etc. August is the monthlong vote on the "Best of Citrus Heights". The Chamber partners with the Big Day of Service. This year the Chamber painted hop scotches all over Citrus Heights.

The Kid's Commerce Biz Expo and Job Fair runs for six weeks and the training helps young entrepreneurs. It helps students to be away from their peers and to meet different business people. The first place Kid's business wins \$1000 and second place is \$750.

Sheri talked about the Sunrise Mall. There are five owners of the 100 acre parcel and they don't get along. The largest owner is in New York City. The owners want to chop up the land for other purposes.

There are maintenance issues such as leaky roofs. Businesses have left the mall because of the lack of upkeep. The owners have been fined several times. The \$400K in fines have not been paid and this will be a great case for eminent domain. The city will either collect the fines or will pre-condem the property. The city would like to see a mixed use development with businesses below and housing above like a town center.



Sheri finished her talk and answered questions. President Deanna thanked her for her interesting talk about the chamber and she presented Sheri with a handcrafted pen made by member Bob Kurtz.

Announcements

President Deanna Maddock - The ransom is paid and the Rotary Bell is back! It was kidnapped by Diana Newman. The ransom that Deanna paid was a bunch of OV stickers and a gift card for the BEST SAMMICH in town - roast beef with everything, extra peppers, no cheese from L&M Liquors!

Community Friendsgiving will be held on Thursday, November 20th, 5:30pm at the Grange. It's a fundraiser to benefit the Teen Council of Orangevale and Fair Oaks.

Last week **Rob Auernig** was given Rotisserie to take home. He said there was an incident involving the chicken and he brought back what was left. This turned out to be a chicken leg wearing the little outfit that Robbie Sarkisian made.

Committee Reports

Janet Cahill said that the next Food Bank Friday will be December 5. On Saturday, December 6, 8:30am, we will cleanup our mile of the American River Parkway trail. Following the cleanup we get a tour of the Native Plant center.

Jim Buntin, International Chairperson, said that the club sent money to **Shelter Box** to help the people affected by the hurricane in Jamaica. He added that the last of the money in the International budget was sent to the Roseville Rotary Club's for their **Global Grant**.

Mike McKibbin said that more than 30 students attended the **Interact** meeting at Casa Roble last Wednesday. Students signed up to help with the Christmas Basket distribution and the American River Parkway cleanup. On December 5, the Interact officers will attend our Rotary meeting.



Bill Wagner, Rotary Foundation chair, brought enrollment forms for Rotary Direct. The minimum donation is \$10 per month from your checking account on a reoccurring basis. Half of the members are enrolled and he's ready to help the rest of the members with the signup.

There are eight Rotary Benefactors in the club. This means that those members are leaving at least \$1000 to rotary in their will. Bill would like to increase the number of people in the Benefactor Society. Members of the Bequest Society have committed to donated more that \$1000 in their will.

Rob Auernig, Vocational chair, said that the next vocational visit will be to the Siemens train assembly factory courtesy of Janet Cahill's husband.

David Shepard, Treasurer said that the members who attended The Rotary Foundation dinner will receive an invoice for the event.

Steve Blair would like the club to participate in the Orangevale Christmas Light Parade. We can use Derek's flat bed trailer which he will pull behind his tractor. He'll get hay bales for the trailer and we'll decorate it with lights the day before the parade.

Steve Blair spoke about the Crab Feed coming up in January. Sign up for Crab Feed assignments. Start bringing in your silent auction items.

Lorie Rheams talked about the Christmas Basket project. The distribution will be on Saturday, December 20. In the morning , the Boy Scouts will unload the items from the cars. Lorie needs Rotarians at 11:00am to go over the donations to ensure that there are enough items. Lorie is still looking for people who want to adopt a family.

Don Russell, Club chair, said that today is National Pickle Day. Why did the pickle got to the school nurse? She felt "dill".

Don has donated 14 gallons of blood at Vitalant. That equates to saving 336 lives. His next appointment is on Nov 19 at 4pm if anyone would like to join him. There is also a blood drive at Divine Savior on December 7.

The club will be dark on November 28. If anyone wants to join him, Don will be having coffee at Pete’s Coffee at 7:30am.

The Christmas party will be on Saturday, December 13.

Vocational Talk - What to Do in Retirement

Before **Phyllis Macdonald** gave her Vocational talk, she announced that the **Petal Connection** has closed down. She will not longer be collecting cans for delivery to the organization.

Phyllis has taken up painting as a way to engage her mind. She asked a friend who is a part time gallery owner in Auburn to help her get started. She tried oil painting a while back but this time, her friend



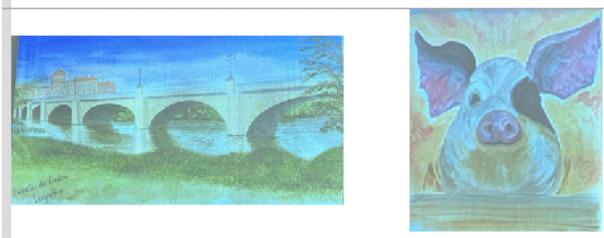
gave her water color paper, brushes and paint.



As Phyllis talked, she showed photos of her paintings - flowers, fruit, dogs, birds, farm animals, etc.

Phyllis uses Pinterest to find a photo she’d like to paint. She likes to paint the details in the painting. When she gets stuck, she asked her artist friend for help who usually says, add more paint!

Phyllis’s studio is a 2x4 table in the corner by her sliding glass door to the patio. She finds the painting experience to be meditative. Phyllis recommends that everyone should “do something”!



Prospector

Bill Wagner, the prospector, said that he attended the Turkey Bowl. He bought raffle tickets and won a big basket of goodies. He was happy and paid \$20.

Bill decided to give each member a chance to answer either a question about the 5180 Rotary Foundation Diner or to give a Happy Fine. Almost everyone gave a Happy Fine.



Dave is happy to have attended a wedding in Cabo.

Keith is happy to be raising two boys that although not gifted students, are doing well in school now. They were all over the place but they have settled down.

Patty - She couldn't answer the Rotary question and paid a \$2 fine.

Bert was able to answer the question - what has a member of the white hat society done for the Foundation? Given more that \$5000 or more in one year. (Bert did this and is a white hat member!)

Rob was happy not to answer a Rotary question and he paid \$2.

Audrey is happy to have her oldest son and friends over for friends-giving.

Mairy is happy to take an upcoming trip to Portugal,

Don is happy to donate \$100 to The Rotary Foundation.

Diana is happy to be done babysitting the bell.

Phyllis is happy to advertise that her husband Donny is playing Celtic music on Wednesday evening. Talk to her for more details.

Steve is happy that Catherine is coming home.

Licia is happy that she went to the Turkey Bowl.



The Orange Ball Raffle

Patty Wolf's raffle ticket was drawn. There were ten golf balls and \$21. Patty pulled the white ball out of the basket. Too bad, so sad. She'll be selling raffle tickets at the next meeting.

Rotisserie Photo Gallery



We are excited for the 5th Annual Orangevale-Fair Oaks Friendsgiving Dinner! This celebration of food, family and friends is sure to bring our community together, once again for a beautiful evening gathering friends and neighbors, as we feast in a family style setting on a traditional Thanksgiving Dinner prepared by O'Connors Woodfire Grill and followed by delicious fresh pies. We look forward to celebrating your generosity and participation