

Chulatarian

Rotary
Club of Chula Vista 

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ROTARY CLUB
OF CHULA VISTA

The weekly newsletter of the Rotary Club of Chula Vista
Chartered February 16, 1926 - Club Number 908 - District 5340
Meets Weekly, Noon, 4475 Bonita Road, Bonita (Chula Vista Golf Course)

LUMA HADDAD
YOUNG LIFE SOUTH BAY
Friday, March 20, 2026, Noon

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Young Life South Bay has been serving teenagers in the communities of National City, Chula Vista and San Ysidro for the last 25 years. Young Life is a non-profit faith organization that is about early intervention through relationships. We place trained, caring adults in the lives of teenagers to provide mentorship, stability, and positive experiences — which leads to stronger decision-making, increased resilience, and healthier communities.

Luma Haddad has been the Young Life Urban Area Director for San Diego South Bay for 25 years and is also the Associate Regional Director for San Diego Metro. Luma works directly with teenagers in Junior High and High Schools and with teen moms on campuses across San Diego. She is passionate about her work with youth and empowering them to know their worth.

She has spoken to audiences of teenagers, women, and youth workers all over the United States and in the Middle East. Luma was born in San Francisco, lived in Amman, Jordan and graduated from Point Loma Nazarene University in San Diego with a major in Broadcast Journalism. She resides in San Diego with her husband Rami and her children Jordan (18) and Yasmeeen (14).

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MEETING HIGHLIGHTS—MARCH 6, 2026

President Ben Koala called the meeting to order. Rochelle Carroll provided the invocation. Songmaster Chuck Day selected an Irish song in honor of upcoming St. Patrick's Day. President-elect Rasha Roshdy asked students, their guests (family and educators with them, and visiting Rotarians to stand for our traditional "Welcome" song.

Our Club hosted students from throughout the region for the District 5340 Four-Way Test Speech Contest Sub Regional. They spoke on a variety of topics including Artificial Intelligence, Sports, and Anxiety. The top two students will move on to the next level and received cash awards. Congratulations!



GOOD-BYE POLIO
THANKS ROTARY





**JIM BIDDLE
NEWS AT NOON**

**BY
BETTY WAZNIS**

Hello, everyone. Welcome to today's edition of the Jim Biddle News at Noon, today brought to you by Rasha Roshdy and the Self Care Circle.

A massive high-pressure system limiting cool, onshore winds from reaching the coast is bringing widespread record heat to San Diego County. High temperatures are expected to continue 20 to 25 degrees above average west of the mountains today and over the weekend. A National Weather Service heat advisory for coastal and valley communities is in effect until at least 8 p.m. tonight, with some relief over the weekend. Several record highs for the date were reached yesterday including in Chula Vista where a high of 91 degrees was reported.

In another sign of unseasonal weather, Death Valley, the driest place in North America, is teeming with life with a once-in-a-decade blossoming of wildflowers known as a superbloom. This year's bloom is the best the park has seen since 2016, thanks to warm temperatures in the last six months, nearly a year's worth of rain since October and the wettest November on record. Desert sunflowers are blanketing areas of the valley with gold, and purple phacelia, brown-eyed primrose and the pink desert five-spot are sprinkled throughout. The fields of flowers on the park's lower elevations are expected to remain until late March. Higher elevations will blossom with color April through June.

California wildlife officials have approved a plan to eradicate Catalina's entire deer population as part of a broader effort to restore the island ecosystem, a move opposed by both hunters and animal welfare advocates, who this week filed a joint lawsuit to stop the plan. The Catalina Island Conservancy's idea calls for professional hunters to shoot the island's nonnative mule deer on the ground over four to five years.

The conservancy, which owns and manages 88% of the island, says eliminating the deer is necessary to bring back the island's unique plants, including the Catalina Island mountain mahogany, which may be the rarest tree in North America. That in turn would reduce wildfire risk, restore groundwater and allow other animals to thrive. The conservancy's plan to restore the island also involves removing invasive plants, cloning rare plant species and seeding the landscape with native flora. In 1930, 10 deer were brought to the island as a game species — a figure that has ballooned to over 2,000 today. Deer hunting has traditionally been permitted, but this fall will mark hunters' last opportunity (and it will be open only to locals). A small number of deer in Avalon will be sterilized and allowed to live out their days on the island.

The Mountain West men's basketball championship tournament is this weekend in Las Vegas. Our SDSU Aztecs beat Colorado State 71 to 62 in yesterday's quarterfinal and will face New Mexico in a semifinal match tonight at 9 pm, with the final game tomorrow. At stake is a spot in the NCAA March Madness tournament.

The journey of today's sponsor, Rasha Roshdy, started in Cairo, Egypt, but it quickly took flight—literally! She moved to the U.S. and ended up marrying her skydiving instructor. He was an Army guy, and hey, she chalks that one up to a rookie mistake. She eventually decided to upgrade to the Navy, proving that she always aims for the horizon. Rasha has lived a dozen different lives, gathering a collection of stories. Some she can tell, and others are strictly classified.

Her latest mission is her most impactful yet. Rasha is launching The Self Care Circle, a brand-new public nonprofit dedicated to supporting refugees and immigrants. Her vision is a Senior Daycare with a twist: a specialized space for senior refugees and immigrants—the group that often feels the most left behind when navigating a new culture. Aims are - A Bridge for Everyone: While focusing on immigrants, the center will also be a welcoming hub for local seniors and veterans. Curing Isolation: No more social distancing by accident. This is about fighting isolation and making sure our elders feel seen, heard, and celebrated. Rasha is looking for early supporters to help turn this vision into reality. If you want to get in on the ground floor of something meaningful, grab Rasha for a chat!

This concludes today's edition of the Jim Biddle News at Noon, today brought to you by Rasha Roshdy and the Self Care Circle.

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TRIVIA NIGHT!



Our Club continued the great event begun by the Chula Vista Sunrise Rotary Club. A large turnout -22 tables!- meant lots of people had fun testing their knowledge on varied topics— world geography, California and Elvis; and we raised funds for our many projects and collaborations. Thank you!



L-R: Reed and Beta Dinsmore, Chris Lewis, Gary Bryant, Neisha and Bernard Hernandez all have their thinking caps on at this table.
At the nearby table, Nathan Oestereich, Shauna Stokes, Diego's dad, Sorokin and Jeanette Badal, President Ben, Diego Quilantan and Iracema Quilantan

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MORE TRIVIA NIGHT HIGHLIGHTS



L-R: Bob Silvas and Nancy Kerwin welcomed guests at the door. Another crowd shot. See if you can find Mike Green and District Governor Luis Carranza.



L-R: A stellar panel of judges helped out—Mark Scott, Jan Mellinger, Betty Waznis, John Lorah, Ryan Crawford and Rowena Bell.

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MEET THE RAMIREZ BAYLON FAMILY This Year's Tijuana Home Build Family



Gerardo was born in Mexico City and Socorro in Guerrero. Gerardo migrated to Tijuana 25 years ago and Socorro 21 years ago in search of jobs and a better life. They met at a Christmas Eve party and have now been together for 21 years. Gerardo polarizes car windows and earns approximately 2500 pesos per week (@\$139). They have five children and one grand daughter.

Mother: Socorro (43)

Father: Gerardo (44)

Daughter: Shaila (19)

Son: Ricardo (16)

Son: Bruce Gerardo (14)

Daughter: Lidia Aurora (11)

Daughter: Marieli (21)

Granddaughter: Yojari Leinani (3)



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MARCH

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**WATER, SANITATION AND
HYGIENE**

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MARK YOUR CALENDARS

MENTAL HEALTH INITIATIVES—Thurs, March 26, 4:00 via Zoom

**2026 CLUB LEADERSHIP LEARNING ASSEMBLY -
(formerly District Training Assembly) Sat, March 28, 7:30—2:30**

TIJUANA HOME BUILD— Saturday, April 11, 6:30 am—all day

MULTI-DISTRICT MEETING—APRIL 24-26 @ GAYLORD PACIFIC

**INSTALLATION/OUTSTALLATION LUNCHEON
Friday, June 5—Noon**

DISTRICT 5340 GOVERNORS' DINNER—June 26, 5:00 pm

**2026 ROTARY INTERNATIONAL CONVENTION
TAIPEI, TAIWAN—June 13-17**