



ROTARY CLUB OF OCEANSIDE SHORELINES

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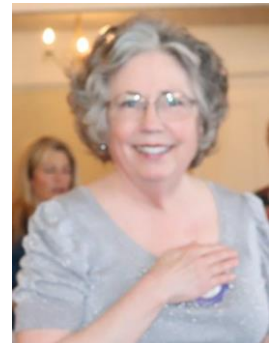


CO-PRESIDENTS
AJ Mazzarella & LJ Fimbres

April 8, 2022



Co-Prez A. J. MAZZARELLA opened the meeting at 12:32 p.m. and then, noting the American flag design on JANET BLEDSOE LACY'S tote bag, said she was the perfect person to lead the **PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE**. JANET quickly gave her camera to ANCHISA FARRANT to capture a photo of leading the pledge.



DALE MAAS provided the **ROTARY MOMENT** saying we see everything (negative) going on in the world, so “it's nice to reflect on the positive” as well, including one happening sort-of in our own neighborhood.

That was a project of 150 Rotarians from our district to build six houses for people just across the Mexican border. DALE asked if anyone in our club had participated in that project, and several voices answered with the name of co-Prez Elect RENEE RICHARDSON (along with husband and fellow Rotarian PAUL WENDEE).



DALE'S other Rotary Moment citation was of a project of the Rotary Club of Lagos Island in Nigeria to provide 5,000 cataract surgeries, 400 in the month of October alone.

These are just two examples, DALE said, of the good work being done by Rotarians all over the world.



RENEE then presented the **CLUB UPDATES**, starting with 16 club members (many – but not RENEE herself – wearing the lime-green T-shirts provided them) who volunteered to help at the recent Ironman event in downtown Oceanside. (*See a description of that day at the end of this Shorelines.*)

Those team members present then posed for a picture with CARRIE CHACON, volunteer coordinator for the event.



RENEE also said that April 22 there will be an away meeting at Breakwater Community Church with food catered by the Oceanside Kitchen Collaborative, and on April 23 Rotarians may volunteer at Oceanside's Earth Day celebration from 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. at Buccaneer Beach.

And on April 30 for our Rotarians at Work day, members will have a chance to help clean up the old cemetery across from the bowling alley on Coast Highway. Our second planned RAW project (sprucing up the garden at a local elementary school) has run into some roadblocks, but PABLO ACOSTA announced that we hope to identify another project to work with schoolkids as well. RENEE said a clipboard would be circulated so people could sign up and also indicate what they would like for the lunch at Breakwater following the RAW project.



RENEE said there will be two district festivities on May 5, "Cinco de Mayo." One will be held in San Diego, and the North County version will take place at the Agua Hedionda Lagoon Discovery Center in Carlsbad. The cost is \$25, and reservations may be made on the district Website (www.rotary5340.org). RENEE said that anyone needing help in signing up should give her a call.

SHOR DENNY had placed fliers at every table about the fitness event held March 25 at Mission Elementary School and cosponsored by her Community Now organization and our Rotary club. Community Now, SHOR said, provided 100 jump ropes and 100 hula hoops and Rotary bought field equipment and 30 balls – Many of the school's, idle during the pandemic, weren't well-maintained. There will be more events to come, SHOR said. She urged – and RENEE agreed – that everyone should get their certification to work with children. "To sum it up," she said, "do the thingy."



In the **INTRODUCTIONS** portion of the meeting, our local author, ALEXA KINGAARD, showed the Chamber of Commerce magazine containing an article and picture of her in a piece on local writers.



BOB PICKREL introduced visitor MANUEL ALVAREZ, whom he said is a civil engineer, originally from Cuba but an American citizen since 1972. He's looking for things to do, BOB said. "He's got a lot of experience. Utilize it and call on him" he said.

TOM BRAULT introduced CARRIE CHACON, joking he first mistook her for the Carrie on "Sex and the City." Actually, he said, she was the volunteer coordinator for the Ironman event and "gave us these wonderful shirts."



ED PARISH had to be prodded to remember to introduce his significant other, ANNE SPERAW.



TOM, who also apparently needed a bit of a nudge to remember, led our "Welcome to Oceanside" song to the tune of "Anchors Aweigh."

BIRTHDAYS AND ANNIVERSARIES were aplenty:

BOB PICKREL was 92 the day before, is soon to celebrate his 71st anniversary with wife DARLENE and his 44th anniversary with Rotary. He gave \$207 to our Oceanside Rotary Club Foundation.

ALEXA KINGAARD donated \$72 for her April 13 birthday.

ERNIE MASCITTI, birthday April 18, said he can't remember if he will be 53 or 54 this year, but he's donating \$78.

ANCHISA FARRANT, April 20, joked that in 33 years, she will be 99 and presented a check for \$66.



Moving on to wedding anniversaries, RENEE RICHARDSON was asked how many years she is celebrating this year. Leaving herself open to a potentially MUCH larger fine, she generously offered to share how many total years in her lifetime she had been married. But no. A.J. confirmed that he wanted to know how long she has been married to PAUL WENDEE, which as it turns out is just 5 years. And so, the club had to settle for just \$5 at this time. So let that be a lesson learned for our Presidents.... When a member sets herself or himself up to make a larger contribution, by all means, take them up on the offer!



Noting that something had been missed in our normal routine, BILL DERN pointedly asked Co-Prez A.J. if he was going to have someone lead the “Birthday Song,” A.J. tried to deflect the blame for his omission by saying, “It wasn’t written on the agenda”, but TOM BRAULT knew better, because he had been copied on the email when the agenda was sent by Secretary RENEE RICHARDSON. “Yes, it IS there!” TOM insisted. Then he walked up to the podium to point to the page and announce, “With ALL CAPS and exclamation points and everything!” Suitable chagrined, A.J. asked TOM to lead the song, which he directed toward ERNIE at the end with the improvised added last line, “Happy 53rd or 54th birthday to you.”



Next, to a standing ovation, JACQUELINE BROWNLEE received her **PAUL HARRIS RECOGNITION**, pin, and certificate from RENEE. Thanks, JACQUELINE, for your generous support of the Rotary International Foundation!

And then came the **HAPPY DOLLARS**.



PABLO ACOSTA, jokingly asking if he could pay in pesos, was nevertheless 5 American dollars happy that his Tricity Pantry is in the final round for a grant to purchase a vehicle so that the nonprofit can help more families.



BOB PICKREL said he'd already given all his happy dollars but then he found another \$5 worth of happiness that guest MANUEL ALVAREZ had come to the meeting.



ROGER VANDERWERKEN said he was \$10 happy and \$10 angry – angry because, after the co-prez (L.J. FIMBRES) had pleaded so vigorously for the return of the presidential gavel last meeting, he

noted that A. J. was still using a butter knife. ROGER then added that he was happy to invite people to come early to the April 22 meeting at his church to help him set up canopies.



ED PARISH was \$5 happy that he hadn't forgotten to introduce ANNE SPERAW. (Yeah. That's the kind of oversight that could lead to "trouble in paradise.")

ALEXA KINGAARD was \$5 happy to have been given a copy of the magazine with the writeup about her.

The **GUEST SPEAKER** was introduced by ALEXA, who said that last month she had the pleasure of working with a group of Rotarians at a safe house in Escondido for survivors of human trafficking. She hadn't dressed properly for a chilly day outdoors pulling weeds and raking leaves, so instead she followed a young lady inside with a half-dozen other volunteers to peel and stick labels on individual packets of makeup removal towelettes.



Eventually, they would be distributed to local motels frequented by abusive men who seek out young girls and women to use in unthinkable ways. The labels affixed to the soaps and towelettes contain a hotline number for those girls caught in these abusive situations to call for help.



"This room is filled with some of the kindest, most-generous, sensitive people I have ever known," Alexa said. "We read about human sex trafficking, but it is not OUR reality." This young woman, she said of our speaker, falls asleep every night grappling with her reality of sexual bondage since childhood to become a community leader.

She is the founder of a nonprofit called Keeping Every Girl Free.

ALEXA said she has been moved by the honest telling of a life marred by unimaginable pain and she thinks that we will be moved, too.

"I am truly honored to be here today amongst such phenomenal role models and leaders," speaker APRIL CASILLAS said, because human trafficking not only has affected her personally but has had a devastating effect on lives around the world, in our nation and in our own communities.

Casillas said there are approximately one million trafficking victims in the U.S., about 300,000 of them children. The average age of entry into sex trafficking is 12 to 14 and 90 percent of the victims first experience sex abuse in their own homes.

Human trafficking is “the fastest growing crime in America,” CASILLAS said.

She said she herself began being sexually abused in her own home at the age of 3. She met her first trafficker at the age of 5 and spent a total of 11 years being sexually exploited.

As written today, she said, there are three elements to human trafficking; force (kidnapping, being held against a person's will, or threats of force), fraud (promise of a job, not having access to documents or identification) and coercion (psychological manipulation, bondage, or being imprisoned within a person's own mind).

It is important, she said, that all three elements must be present for the situation to be considered human bondage, with the exception for someone under 18 who can't be considered to have given consent for sex.

“I also want to impress upon everyone,” CASILLAS said, “that it is important to know that human trafficking can happen to anyone regardless of age, gender, race, or socio-economic status.” She repeated this statement when asked if victims tend to be Hispanic. But she said proximity to the border can affect the statistics with the number of vulnerable people crossing without documentation.

Contacting the motels is important, she said, because research shows that 75 percent of trafficking survivors came in contact with a motel or hotel at some point. The national hotline received more than 6,000 calls from motels or hotels in 2019.

CASILLAS said a local organization approached her about creating a local hotline and that's how Keeping Every Girl Free was started.

In early 2020, she, her husband, and her son started putting stickers with the national and local hotline numbers onto motel-sized soap bars and makeup wipes that could be placed in motels and hotels in Orange and Los Angeles counties.

“I would be honored to be able to venture into San Diego,” CASILLAS said.

To date, she said, her nonprofit has partnered with more than 60 hotels and motels and has distributed more than 70,000 soap bars and 25,000 makeup wipes. She does outreach events once a month, distributing 5,000 to 10,000 soaps or wipes. Each box contains 500

pieces and costs \$50.

“But the most impactful thing to share with you today is when just one single call is made from a motel, and there is a successful recovery, with one of our most recent calls being that of a 15-year-old female, who was successfully recovered – that not only gives me hope, but that is priceless.”

During the question-and-answer period, CASILLAS said that California is No. 1 in the nation in sex trafficking with Los Angeles leading the way.

Answering another question, she said, yes boys are involved as well as girls but they usually have more opportunity for outreach.

JANET BLEDSOE LACY asked how the motels and hotels are selected, and CASILLAS answered that law enforcement officials can help identify problem sites.

ROGER VANDERWERKEN asked if pornography is a factor, and CASILLAS said that America has more strip clubs than any other country and it is documented what pornography does to the brain.

BILL DERN asked about the safe houses, and CASILLAS answered that, after counseling and work on both physical and emotional fitness, after a year, victims feel confident enough to go back to work.

ALEXA KINGAARD asked about the victims' ages and was answered that primarily they are 18 and under.

CASILLAS was asked “What can we do?”, and she responded to “be on watch and to know about the hotline.” And, she said, “you can always call local law enforcement if things do not look right.” Sometimes, she said, a neighbor will call – or a teacher.

TERRI HALL asked about putting the soap bars in airplanes, and CASILLAS answered that signage about the hotline is posted in many airport restrooms and that flight attendants are aware of the situation.

A.J. Presented our speaker APRIL CASILLAS with a potted succulent plant created by ANCHISA FARRANT.



OPPORTUNITY DRAWING; DAVE HALL had the winning number but did not extract the joker from the deck. He declined the \$10 consolation prize.



IRONMAN VOLUNTEERS IN ACTION

As mentioned earlier in this newsletter, 16 members of our club answered the call and signed up to serve as volunteers on April 1 to support the Ironman 70.3 Triathlon in Oceanside. We gathered at the Junior Seau Community Center at the base of the pier at the appointed hour of 1 pm and sat on a bench there, awaiting instructions. Volunteer Coordinator CARRIE CHACON soon peeled us off in groups to man various stations in the registration process.



TOM BRAULT, MARTI FARRIS, and A.J. MAZZARELLA were assigned to the first table where QR codes and ID's were checked and waiver forms were distributed. LOLA SHERMAN acted as a waiver enforcer, making sure that runners had their legal release forms in order before they proceeded to the main registration tables for participant sign-in which were manned by JIM SCHRODER, BILL DERN, RENEE RICHARDSON, JACQUELINE BROWNLEE, L.J. FIMBRES, DAVE and TERRI HALL, and VICKIE PROSSER.



Bags of swag were handed off to the runners, along with bright smiles, by TINA ORTIZ and ANCHISA FARRANT. DALE MAAS made sure that runners were familiar with the map showing the competition sites and the routes for the swimming, running, and bicycling. And we are not certain what BRIAN LONG's assigned duty was supposed to be that day, but here we see him deep in contemplation or meditation or checking his stock portfolio on his phone. One last photo, just to show that the 5 hours of dutiful service did include some fun moments together – Check out the smiles on VICKIE and JACQUELINE! Several of our volunteers have already told CARRIE that they are looking forward to helping out the Ironman again next year!



COMING SOON TO OCEANSIDE ROTARY

4/22 AWAY Regular Meeting at Breakwater Community Church courtyard
506 S. Nevada Street, Oceanside

Saturday 4/23 – Volunteer opportunity at Oceanside’s Earth Day celebration - 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. at Buccaneer Beach.

Saturday 4/30 - Rotarians at Work Day - Oceanside Cemetery cleanup, with lunch to follow at Breakwater Community Church.

NOTE: The meeting dates and locations for May might be in flux, due to the country club’s schedule. Once the board makes a decision on this, we will let folks know which dates to put into their calendars.