

August 28, 2020

Soooo, since this is the first time your reporter was tapped by the editor to cover a Zoom meeting, it is best that we review the Zoom protocol reminders. Let's see, "Keep yourself muted unless called upon". Well, like that is going to work on an attorney! "Raise your hand if you want to speak so we can call you". It appears to your reporter that if nature calls and you need to raise your finger for the old number one, you may be in trouble. "Remember to return to mute after speaking". Your reporter recognizes that rule. It is also known as the "Rudy Rule".

Next meeting: North River Farms Measure L on the ballot.

CO-PRESIDENT DALE MAAS muted the meeting to order and we were underway. (Side Note: Apparently, there was some issue with the enunciation of big words by our president at the recent Trivia Night social. He assured us that he's thick-skinned, though, and so hopefully he won't hold any grudges.)



CLUB UPDATES:

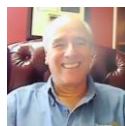
DARK: Friday September 4th

Next Zoom Meeting – Friday, September 11th

Virtual Beach Cleanup – Saturday, September 12th – Oceanside Harbor

Next Zoom Evening Happy Hour – Wednesday, September 16.

A FEW WORDS (AND A FEW NEW MEMBER INDUCTIONS) FROM OUR D.G.



District Gov. STEVE WEITZEN reported that it was a great occasion having the honor to induct new members into Rotary - into the "best" club... Yes, at long last, our frequent Zoom guests JACQUELINE BROWNLIEE, TINA ORTIZ and BRIAN LONG were



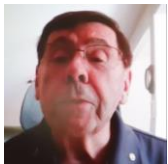


officially added to our Oceanside Rotary Club roster. The D.G. welcomed each of them into an organization with 1.2 million members worldwide and proudly mentioned that they could attend a Rotary meeting anywhere on the globe, even Antarctica.

He did his first in-person visit to San Luis Rey Rotary. Then came the transition to Zoom. We will eventually get out of Zoom but he noted that the 37 people participating in today’s meeting is a high percentage of our membership. In fact, he recommended that we might consider continuing to hold one Zoom meeting a month even when we come out of Covid restrictions.

A project that interests D.G. STEVE this year is human trafficking, especially sex trafficking of kids. Sadly, he said, often the kids are trafficked by family members. Since students are not going to school at this point, he said, teachers cannot pick up on signs that might be able to be detected in person.

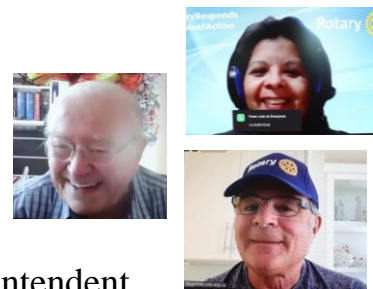
ROTARY MOMENT



CHUCK ANDREAN read several uplifting remarks from kids, like the 4-year-old who climbed in the lap of an elderly neighbor who had just lost his spouse and just sat there. When his mom asked what he was doing, the boy replied, “Nothing, I was just helping him cry.”

VISITING ROTARIANS AND GUESTS:

STEVE WEITZEN, District 5340 Governor
 CHUCK PRETTO, District Governor for 2022-23
 NADIA NAVARRETE from Argentina
 RUDY VAN HUNNICK
 MICHAEL PROVENCE
 JULIE VITALE, Oceanside Unified School District superintendent.



Songmeister BILL DERN sang our welcome song with other mics thankfully muted.

HAPPY DOLLARS

Had you noticed that our brand-new members had not been told at their induction that we are a “FINE” club? (Our subtle hint that they should be opening up their

wallets.) Well, they got to make amends, and make some contributions to the club coffers, as they were called upon to open up our Happy Dollars.

TINA ORTIZ was in the San Luis Rey Club for 23 years but has been out of Rotary for about three years, so she's giving \$26.



In addition to his joy at becoming a new member, BRIAN LONG had lots of other great news to share. He is celebrating two recent closings and also that his daughter graduated from college and was hired by UPS in Phoenix in HR, so he is giving \$1,000 - Not an amount to be expected all the time.

JACQUELINE BROWNLEE told us how she loves the energy in our club 100%, so she's happy \$100.

LYN CORDER, \$25 for all the support she received after her husband AL's passing.

ERNIE MASCITTI, \$10 "for whoever sponsored the new members."

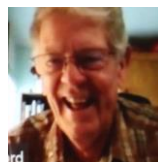
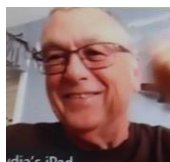
A.J. MAZZARELLA gave \$60 - \$20 for each new member.

JAY CRAWFORD, \$50 for going to Montana for his grandson's wedding, plus he's sending \$200 to Oceanside Kitchen Collaborative, asking us to support it, too.

ED PARISH, \$50 - thankful that TINA has become a member. He was formerly in San Luis Rey Rotary with her.

DAN WILSON, \$25 - happy to be getting the youth program going.

JIM SCHRODER, \$50 - for our new members and for our honorary member in Argentina, NADIA, visiting today. JIM is an honorary member of her club.



PROGRAM



Program Chair JANET BLEDSOE LACY began her introduction of our guest speaker by referencing the Constitution and the First Amendment supporting the freedom of religion and the free exercise of speech and the press. In 1972-74, Watergate was covered by two reporters for the Washington Post who both courageously reported on the presidential scandal of that time. Fast forward to the San Diego Union-Tribune investigation of Congressperson Duncan Hunter and today's speaker again engaged in the time-honored tradition of investigative reporting and thereby obtained incriminating information. Of course, some things never change. The congressional representative labeled the reporting "fake news", although it must not have been TOO fake, for he is now close to starting his prison sentence.

MORGAN COOK is a member of the investigative reporting team at The San Diego Union-Tribune. She was named journalist of the year in 2017 by the local Society of Professional Journalists for a series of stories uncovering tens of thousands of dollars of improper campaign spending by Rep. Duncan Hunter. COOK has also worked at the North County Times and The Orange County Register.



Our speaker started by noting that everyone wants to know who her modern-day equivalent to Deep Throat was. The tip actually was given to an editor at the paper and to this day MORGAN does not know who that person is.

There was a Federal Election Commission letter which focused on Hunter's expenditures on video games and private school funds. The letter was part of the public record. Congressperson Hunter reported that he paid about \$1,300 for video games out of his campaign fund account by accidentally taking the wrong card from his wallet. He attributed the school funding to tuition. Our speaker indicated that she could see the possibility of such a coincidence. But the investigative reporter philosophy is "trust but verify", so she did that by poring through past campaign reports. As she looked those reports over, she noticed a lot of odd entries, such as payments for oral surgery. There were also ongoing payments for fast food and for a trip to Italy. Our speaker asked about these expenses, but the congressperson's answers did not address all the questions.

COOK then began to look for patterns with his campaign expenses. There were multiple charges at the same restaurant which was outside of the district in Encinitas. It was noted that the website of the restaurant had an icon for a school

lunch program. It turned out that the private school that Congressperson Hunter's child attended was on the list of schools that participated in that lunch program. (Hmmm...)

Generally speaking, politicians often get caught in subtle episodes resulting in undue influence associated with campaigning. In this case it did not initially look like influence was part of the problem, but still something was amiss. Eventually this investigation received national coverage after an interest group in Washington, DC filed an ethics complaint.

Sometime after that, the Department of Justice asked the ethics investigation to suspend their probe. This type of request is usually a precursor to an ongoing criminal investigation, which is what indeed did occur. As our speaker noted, once the story went national, it was "no longer her baby" as other reporters became involved in the story.

In August 2018, Congressperson Hunter and his wife were indicted in a 47-page indictment which included charges of conspiracy, wire fraud and violating campaign finance laws. This indictment contained over 200 explicit acts. The indictment included the funds that were diverted to the school lunch program.

Congressperson Hunter initially said that his wife was to blame, and that he was not responsible for the criminal actions but was sure his wife would be investigated. (Side note: After multiple marriages, your reporter can attest that this is not necessarily a sound strategy.)

This "blame the spouse" routine did not go over well in the district either. Citizens of the 50th congressional district were taking to the streets in protest. There were protesters with signs outside of the congressperson's office calling for his resignation. Our speaker said it was cool to see people active in public affairs.

The congressperson's wife entered a guilty plea eventually and this made it much more difficult for the congressperson to deny his role in the criminal activity. Six months later, Congressperson Hunter pleaded guilty to the same charge that his wife did, and he was given an 11-month prison sentence. Congressperson Hunter is scheduled to report to prison in January 2021.

As noted earlier, Congressperson Hunter originally went on the attack against the newspaper, stating that it had endorsed Hillary Clinton and was out to get him. MORGAN COOK, our speaker, was accused of bias. She indicated that she never

felt scared or threatened. She just tried to tell the truth and verify her work. From her perspective as a reporter, it did not matter if there was an indictment or not - Her job as part of a watchdog team is to report the truth. As our speaker observed, with a watchdog, if a bush moves oddly, they bark until something comes out. The watchdog's job is to bark, bark, bark.

We are grateful to MORGAN for sharing this story and her experiences with us. It was quite enlightening to get this glimpse of what goes on behind the scenes in the news. Another example of how tuning into our Rotary meetings can help to keep us better informed about what is going on in the world and in our community. And at our next meeting on September 11, we will get the chance to learn more about the proposed North River Farms development and the ballot initiative that we the voters of Oceanside will decide upon in November. Be there!

REMINDER ON HOW TO SEND IN YOUR HAPPY DOLLARS

Remember, we are all on the honors system for following through on our contributions to the Club and the Club Foundation and the R.I. Foundation. There are two ways to settle your accounts for fines and happy dollars. You can use the Venmo app on your smartphone. (Download the program wherever you get your apps. If you sign up to make your payments as a direct withdrawal from your banking account, there are no fees for this service.) Or you can send a check in through snail mail, addressed to our Treasurer LES NEWQUIST (7922 Capela Place, Carlsbad, CA 92009)



Either way, make sure that you include a note to specify to which account or fund LES should be directing your payment. That way we can be sure that your money goes where you want it.

RARK PERFORMS AN “ESSENTIAL SERVICE”

Over the many weeks that Oceanside Rotary has been engaging in our RARK (Random Acts of Rotary Kindness), a wide variety of items have been delivered (mostly by our Designated Delivery Dude BILL DERN) to our members and friends. Anything from fruit and veggie baskets to craft beers to baking supplies – even a butterfly habitat, if you can believe that. But this past week, our RARK was pressed into service to deliver some very important items: The coveted Blue Badges to our new members-to-be in time for their induction meeting. And, since we happened to be in the neighborhood dropping their badges off, why not throw in a bottle of wine for good measure, too?





We have photos of both TINA ORTIZ and JACQUELINE BROWNLEE accepting these gifts from the club. (Presumably, BRIAN LONG either has already received his, too ... or soon will be. Welcome to Oceanside Rotary, friends!



And our friend DAN WILSON was on the receiving end of this basket, lined with a colorful kitchen towel, and filled with an assortment of healthy veggies to enjoy in the days ahead. Bon appetit!

RUDY GOT HIS “HAPPY BIRTHDAY” AFTER ALL



As you may recall, at our Trivia Night social event we were looking for RUDY VAN HUNNICK at the end of that evening to sing “Happy Birthday to You” to him, but sadly he had already logged off of Zoom by then. We pledged that we would salute him in song at our next Zoom gathering, but another group actually beat us to the punch on that. At a recent Zoom meeting of the Board of the Oceanside Museum of Art, the fine folks at OMA not only sang to him, but they had prepared personalized cards and banners to display via their computer cameras to commemorate RUDY’s milestone anniversary of his arrival on Earth. Happy 90th, RUDY!



COMING SOON TO OCEANSIDE ROTARY

Friday, September 11 – Regular Zoom meeting
“Debate on Prop L – North River Farms Development”

Saturday, September 12 – Virtual Beach Cleanup # 2 – Oceanside Harbor

Wednesday, September 16 – Zoom Evening Social @ 5:30 pm

Friday, September 18 – Board meeting on Zoom

Friday, September 25 – TBD