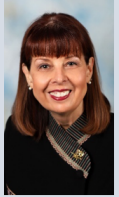




**ROTARY CLUB OF
OCEANSIDE**

SHORELINES

Tom Brault Editor-in-Chief	Janet Bledsoe Lacy Photographer	Tom Brault Reporter
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**CO-PRESIDENTS
AJ Mazzarella &
Renee Richardson**

SPECIAL EVENING EDITION
Thursday, February 9, 2023



Attendees had been instructed, in no uncertain terms, to arrive at our evening Valentine Social by 5:30 pm on the dot. And by golly, when I arrived at Coomber Craft Wines in downtown Oceanside at 5:28 pm (fashionably, but barely early), a grand gaggle of Rotarians and friends were already gathered in the back room of the joint, snagging our charcuterie cups and chocolate covered strawberries to prepare for a festive, high energy evening together on the town. Attendance was quite good, and we ended up commandeering about 6 or 7 full tables, which was about half of the available seating in the space. Our tables had been delightfully decorated by our perennial Valentine Sweetheart NANCY RUSSIAN and her lovely assistant LUIS RODRIGUEZ. Themed balloons, a sheet of challenging Valentine Trivia questions, colorful garlands, and Hershey's Kisses were all tastefully arranged, and each table held a cheese and cracker platter for the assembled friends to share. But wait! ... There's more!! Beautiful long-stemmed roses were liberally distributed and more than a few bottles chock full of Lindt assorted chocolate truffles were up for grabs, too. NANCY truly outdid herself!



Of course, being a Craft Wine place, a big part of the evening was the chance to sample a flight of six tastings of various vintages. It was interesting to see the choices that each individual made, because it was up to you to determine your own personal selection of sips. Some went for all reds. Others, all whites. And some folks were so pleased with the tastes that they went back and bought full bottles of their favorites to enjoy throughout the evening.

Did I forget to mention that each table also held a jar with a daintily wrapped lottery ticket for each guest to scratch off for up to a \$1,000 windfall? I did not hear anybody crowing about THAT big of a jackpot, but young master BLAKE MAAS did have a ticket with three separate wins on it, totaling \$20! Score! And, true to form, Our Little Miss Lucky Ducky ANCHISA FARRANT also had a winner in her hand. (Hers was only \$4, but heck - that was better than most of us got!)

For the first half hour, the volume level kept ramping up as more guests trickled into the venue and everyone was roaming the tables and engaged in lively conversations. Then at 6 pm, the entertainment started on the stage. We were treated to the vocal talents of CELESTE BARBIER who crooned through a wide variety of songs and styles pretty much non-stop for over an hour. It was beautiful music, but this uptick in the decibel levels made it a bit harder to catch everything being said by our friends, so we just kept talking louder and louder. (I felt a little sorry for the singer having to compete with all of our noise, but after all, she had a microphone in front of her and therefore certainly could hold her own, and she did not seem fazed at all by the background chatter. And although we might not have been the most rapt or attentive audience she could have had, we did really appreciate and enjoy the entertainment. Didn't I tell you that it was a "festive, high-energy evening"?)

Would it surprise you to hear that Co-President RENEE RICHARDSON could be seen actively recruiting Coomber customers to become Rotarians? One couple vacationing from out of state got to hear all about Rotary and she encouraged them to Google a club in their state when they got home. Then there were two young women at the cash register who got to listen to RENEE go on and on about Rotary! The poor things hadn't even gotten their wine!!!!

At a little after 7 o'clock, CELESTE took a break (after giving a shout out to our group from Oceanside Rotary and recalling a few of her past experiences with Rotarians who she called "just the best people.") With a break in the music, we huddled closer together for the long-awaited awarding of raffle prizes. Here again,

NANCY outdid herself, and there were almost as many prizes as there were participants. The very first prize was a beautiful pair of wine glasses and that lucky ticket was held by our President Elect SHOR DENNY. (This of course led to a chorus of folks claiming that the draw must have been “RIGGED!!!”) But then when the very next prize went to JIM SCHRODER - the fellow who seemed to be leading that chorus of hecklers – the vocal claims of foul play seemed to settle down pretty quickly. JIM had won a compact personal space heater, perfect (as a different heckler noted) “for his cold, lonely nights.” BLAKE MAAS really was hoping to snag the next prize which was a big box of Jelly Bellies candy, but alas, Lucky ANCHISA got that sweet gift instead.

An awesome, blinged out keychain with the word “AWESOME” spelled out in glittery crystals was won by SUSAN BROWN. Then there was some speculation by the masses that NANCY might have gotten a volume discount on Brandini Toffee Popcorn, because the next four winners all got big boxes of those delectable sweets: SHOR’s partner DENEEN GIBSON, VICKIE PROSSER, RON MARBEN, and BRAD FISHER (which brought more catcalls of “RIGGED!”, since BRAD’s wife TAMARA was the person drawing the winning tickets out of the bowl).

Next up were two separate boxed sets of beautiful wine glasses which were won by MIKE CURTIN’s guest from Carlsbad Rotary SUZANNE STEVENS and by PAUL WENDEE (but his wife RENEE immediately claimed them for herself). Fresh off of PAUL’s win, the very next winner was ... (What are the odds?) ... RENEE. (Cue the repeat calls of “RIGGED!”) RENEE’s prize was the first in a series of sets of coasters. Other proud new coaster owners were: MELISSA RODRIGUEZ (who hooted and hollered and danced as if she had won the \$1,000 lottery prize, proving how easily pleased she can be), BLAKE MAAS (keeping his lucky streak going), A.J. MAZZARELLA’s guest DANA WHEELER, and the last winner of the night was VICKIE PROSSER (who must have stolen that ticket from husband LLOYD, since she had already won popcorn earlier in the drawing).

But really, we all were winners that night, having had a splendid time with good friends and delicious foods and beverages along with fine musical entertainment. All in all, it was a great Thursday night out and a marvelous way to celebrate the Valentine season! But with the prizes all given out, the munchies all gobbled up, and the wine glasses all drained, members gradually began to say their “adieu”s as they left. Those who lingered a bit longer heard more songs from CELESTE as she came back for another set. I must confess that I was one of the earlier departers, but I heard through the grapevine that the serious “party animals” of our group

were MIKE CURTIN and his guest SUZANNE who might have been the last of us to leave.

Thanks again to NANCY and LUIS for all they did to make this evening such a magical success. We only wish we had gotten the chance to hear the answers to the trivia questions. (Perhaps they will be revealed at a future meeting? ... Or perhaps we will never know what year the very first Valentine poem was sent. Ah, well. Life goes on.)





ROTARIANS OUT AND ABOUT

I'm not sure if this really counts as an "Out and About" experience, but recently when ROBYN DERN flew into town with her darling almost 9-month-old daughter BROOKE in tow, ROBYN's dad Grandpa TOM BRAULT and Grandma LINDA (along with Aunt GERILYN) drove all the way across Oceanside for a combined family visit at the home of BROOKE's other grandfather, Papa BILL DERN. We shared some good meals and interesting anecdotes, but really all any of us wanted to do was just sit and watch the newest member of both the BRAULT and DERN families as she crawled and climbed and smiled and just was her mesmerizingly adorable self. At one point, she astounded all of us by standing straight up on her own, with no support from any furniture or anyone, for the very first (and second) times. Later, the granddads were sent out on a mission to buy some socks for the wee one, and after considerable research, comparisons, and debate, they settled on purchasing this set of basic whites which ended up being a perfect fit for their practically perfect granddaughter.

BILL actually DID go "Out and About" recently, and he has a photo to prove it. He and KATHY went all the way to Woodenville, Washington to celebrate the 45th birthday of his eldest son CHRIS. Here we see them all, plus CHRIS's wife AMBER, toasting this auspicious milestone at a wine tasting. And just to prove how great of a host he is to his sons and other relations, we have a photo of the delicious cioppino that BILL concocted when son JEFF (visiting from England)

and son JASON and his wife MINDEE (visiting from Phoenix) popped by for a weekend to celebrate BILL's birthday. (... FYI, his milestone was just a bit bigger than CHRIS's.)



COMING SOON TO OCEANSIDE ROTARY

Friday, February 17th - Board Meeting Via Zoom at noon

Friday, February 24th - Regular Meeting – El Camino Country Club

Friday, March 10th - AWAY Meeting – VANC (Veterans Association of North County) – 1617 Mission Avenue, Oceanside

SAVE THE DATES:

Saturday, March 25th – District Training Assembly at Liberty Station. 8 am to 2 pm. Register at www.rotary5340.org (No fee for attending. Car pool will be available) Let RENEE know if you will be attending, or she will “keep bugging you!”

Friday, March 31st – Volunteer to help registration at Ironman event

Regular meeting canceled for that date

Saturday, April 22nd – Rotarians at Work Day service project