



June 13, 2025

OPENING: At precisely 12:30 pm, the ever-punctual **RENEE RICHARDSON** rang a teeny little tinkling chime. When asked why she didn't use the regular official Rotary bell which was sitting right there on the table, she confessed that she had hoped that we might have thought that she had actually lost husband **PAUL WENDEE's** gavel. Of course, she had not, and she then whipped out the gavel to resounding clang the big bell and bring the meeting to order.



PLEDGE: **RENEE** asked your erstwhile Shorelines reporter to lead the club in the Pledge of Allegiance. As part of the introduction, he was honored to mention that the following day would be the 250th birthday of his beloved United States Army and asked everyone to recite the Pledge with him to honor the men and women who have served our nation so valiantly for so many years



FOUR WAY TEST: **BILL DERN** led the attendees in reciting the Four Way Test.



CLUB UPDATES: **RENEE** began by giving an update on the situation surrounding the resignation of Rotary International President-Elect Mario Cesar Martins de Camargo by reading a message from our incoming District Governor Luis Carranza:

“Since my first communication, additional information has been shared by our Zone 26/27 Rotary International Director, Dan Himelspach. It is clear now that a series of complex business matters involving Mario and the Brazilian government, which resulted in legal restrictions and an inability to travel internationally, were at the heart of this situation. In addition, concerns

regarding the misuse of Rotary funds contributed to the difficult decision for Mario to step down.

While this news is undoubtedly disheartening, we must keep our perspective. Rotary is far greater than any one individual. Our mission, our values, and the incredible service we provide through the collective power of our clubs and members remain unshaken.

This year's theme, "United for Good," is not tied to any one leader. It was created through the voices, hearts, and hands of Rotarians everywhere, and it belongs to all of us! That spirit of unity is what we need to embrace as we move forward."

Other club updates included:

Friday, June 20th- June 26th – Paul and Renee to attend the RI Convention in Calgary.

Friday, June 27th – Demotion Dinner 5:30 pm at El Camino Country Club. Cost is \$50 per person. After someone in the crowd noted that neither of our Co-Presidents were present at this meeting, the heckler yelled out, "Who are we demoting?" a quick-thinking Rotarian responded, "You'll have to attend to find out!"

Saturday, June 28th – Independence Day Parade at 9:00 am. Details to follow on where and when the club will gather and decorate the flatbed truck which many of us will ride upon.

VISITING ROTARIANS AND GUESTS:



BILL DERN introduced our first guest, and guest speaker, **MIKE METZ**, who is the District 5340 RYLA Treasurer.

DAVE NYDEGGER welcomed previous Oceanside resident and Rotarian **DEVIN NAKANO**. **DEVIN** moved to Idaho for graduate school but is now looking to come back home and is thinking about joining our club. (After the meeting, **DEVIN** was one of the few folks who followed through on **RENEE's** request for helpers to tear down and store our Rotary paraphernalia. Clearly, the man knows how to be of service!) Welcome, **DEVIN**!

DAN WILSON introduced young Rotarians and RYLA alumni **TINA VU** from Fallbrook High School, and **VERENICE LEON**, **LANAE BRANCH**, and **ALEKSEI MERITT-POWELL** from Oceanside High. In addition to attending RYLA last year, **ALEKSEI** volunteered to return as a camp mentor this year, served as the first President of the new OHS Interact Club, and won both our Rotary Scholarship this year AND was selected as class Valedictorian for the Class of 2025. Well done, **ALEKSEI**!

SONGS: Our master showman, **TOM BRAULT**, brought the house down with rousing renditions of four, yes FOUR songs! Who knew our \$45 meal price got us lunch AND a show! To honor Beach Boy **BRIAN WILSON**, who recently passed away, we started with two of his classics, “California Girls” and “God Only Knows What I’d Be Without You”, then transitioned to the club stalwart “Smile”, and finished up with the traditional “Oceanside Rotary Welcome Song”. As always, our guests looked duly impressed except for those young folks seated next to me who looked more relieved than impressed when the last notes of the unfamiliar (...to them) tunes ended.



SPECIAL ANNOUNCEMENTS: **RENEE** reminded everyone that dues statements for the next Rotary year were emailed out on June 1st and are due back by July 1st.

She also told us about a recent event that she and Co-President **PAUL WENDEE** attended with our sister club in Tijuana called the Blind Dinner Fundraiser. The catch was that all the attendees were forced to wear blindfolds for the entire event! The first issue came when dinner was served, and our friend **DAVID CASH** from Club Tijuana swore that the entrée he was served, while supposed to be vegetarian, was actually squid! Vegetarian **RENEE** was concerned until they found out that it was actually a pickled portobello mushroom. Whew, crisis averted! The next challenge was trying to use the restroom, which required guides to lead them. **RENEE** said the night gave her a whole new perspective on the challenges that

sight challenged people have and the night was quite the experience, which was capped off when the US Consul General in Tijuana was inducted as an honorary Rotarian.

Last, **RENEE** gave us an update on our ongoing Backpack Project. We currently have around 72 empty backpacks and are looking for materials to fill them.

RENEE projects a “backpack stuffing party” in the near future and asked that anyone ordering supplies from Amazon wait until July 1st to order so that she doesn’t get a bunch of packages shipped to her house while she and **PAUL** are in Calgary.

ANNIVERSARIES AND BIRTHDAYS: June is a traditionally big month for weddings, so the list of marriage anniversaries was long, but only a few on the list were in attendance. Not present, but still celebrating 57 years of matrimony, were



LARRY and **CATHIE HATTER** and **DAVE** and **TERRI HALL**.

Also, congratulations to **ERNIE** and **NANCY MASCITTI** celebrating 35 years since they both said, “I do!” **TOM BRAULT** was present and was \$45 happy to the Oceanside Rotary Club Foundation for his long and happy marriage to his lovely wife, **LINDA**. **DAN WILSON** gave \$40 happy dollars in honor of his wife, **DEB**, and their 37 years of wedded bliss.



Celebrating a Rotary milestone this month was **ANCHISA FARRANT**, who has been a member of our club for a lucky 13 years, but adding in her Rotary time in Thailand puts her at the milestone 25-year mark. **ANCHISA** donated \$20. Although not able to join us, we’d like to congratulate **MELISSA RODRIGUEZ** as she celebrates her ninth year in Rotary. Thanks to both of you for your Service Above Self!

Our lone birthday gal this month is **JANET BLEDSOE LACY**, who would be celebrating her big day on June 15th. **RENEE** encouraged everyone to send her a birthday card or email note.

HAPPY DOLLARS: Guest **DEVIN NAKANA** led off by being \$5 happy just to be at our meeting.





LAURA BASSETT was \$10 happy for making it back from her two-week European vacation.

TINA ORTIZ was \$20 happy to be back after a long absence due to some family issues and some painful gallstones. So glad you're feeling better and back with us, **TINA!**



Finally, **BILL DERN** was \$5 glad to be going to Las Vegas to spend Father's Day with his two sons and their families and said he will be spending a lot of time over there with them over the next two years.



PROGRAM: Our guest speaker for the day, **MIKE METZ**, currently serves as the Treasurer for District 5340's Rotary Youth Leadership Awards (RYLA), but has been involved in RYLA at the district level for an amazing 26 years. **MIKE** has only been a Rotarian for 27 years, but he became hooked on RYLA after serving as a mentor at the camp during his very first year in Rotary and has been involved in doing the hard work to make it happen every year since. If you're not familiar, RYLA is our servant leader development camp for high school juniors (our other leadership program is LEAD for 8th graders) which takes place over three days every April at Idyllwild Camp. RYLA alumni, now high school seniors, can volunteer to come back and serve as camp mentors, and it is those mentors who essentially run the whole weekend. Mentors are required to commit to attending weekly planning meetings starting in December and put in hours of hard work to ensure a memorable weekend for the newest family of "Rylarians", as they are called.

MIKE started off his presentation by showing a great "pump" video showing several short highlights of the camp but which may also cause a few phone calls and emails from the owners of the Top Gun movie franchise. Apparently, all the staff and mentors are given cool call signs, thus the tie to Top Gun. This year, we had over 250 students from schools all over San Diego and Imperial Counties that were broken down into families of 8 to 9 students. One of the unique things RYLA does is to force attendees to get out of their comfort zone and have new experiences by intentionally ensuring that there are no students from the same high school placed into the same family. I'm sure all of us remember how important social circles were in high school and how uncomfortable we were stepping out of

them, so this was a great way to start a weekend of growth and learning for the participants.

We were fortunate to have four RYLA alumni attend our meeting, three who attended this year and one who attended in 2024 and then returned this year as a camp mentor. **MIKE** asked each of them to come up to the podium and talk about their RYLA experience. **LANAE BRANCH**, one of the students we



sponsored from Oceanside High School, told us that she learned the value of taking little steps in both changing how you see yourself as well as in accomplishing challenging goals. **TINA VU**, from Fallbrook High School, learned a ton about Rotary culture which really appealed to her, and she came away from the weekend determined to revitalize the Interact Club at her school. **VERENICE LEON**, another one of our OHS students, told us how she is normally very introverted, but that RYLA helped her immensely in leaving her comfort zone and finding her voice as a leader. Finally, **ALEKSEI MERITT-POWELL** from OHS talked about how his role as a mentor inspired him to look beyond biases and perceptions and see the greatness in people that you don't know.

MIKE shared one of the great components of the RYLA camp which was something called the "Culture Walk." In small groups, each member of the family was required to answer three questions: "What would you like us to know?", "What do you not want to hear again?", and "How can we support you?". Each student talked about how the Culture Walk helped them to open their minds to different cultural experiences and to broaden their perspectives by listening to others' lived experiences. Sounds like an amazing exercise!

MIKE finished his presentation by advocating for club members to consider serving as RYLA mentors, and showed a short video highlighting the fun that was had by all. **RENEE** added that **PAUL** served as a mentor this year and had a wonderful time while encountering a few surprises in that it not only snowed in late April, but **PAUL** also met someone who talked more than he did! Is that possible? There was also a rumor that **PAUL** may have been dressed up in costume, but unless we see pictures it didn't happen. Seriously, we as Rotarians have two awesome opportunities to help grow the next generation of servant

leaders and Rotarians by serving as a mentor at either LEAD (2 days in October) or RYLA (3 days in April). If you are interested in either one, please reach out to **DAN WILSON**.

After a short question and answer session, **RENEE** presented **MIKE** with our traditional gift of a beautiful pot of succulents grown and arranged by our very own **ANCHISA FARRANT**.



OPPORTUNITY DRAWING: **DANA ALBERT** was the winner of the last opportunity drawing for this Rotary year, but after drawing a measly two instead of that pesky Joker, it looks like the \$1,000 jackpot will roll over to next year. **DANA** graciously donated his \$10 consolation prize to Happy Dollars.

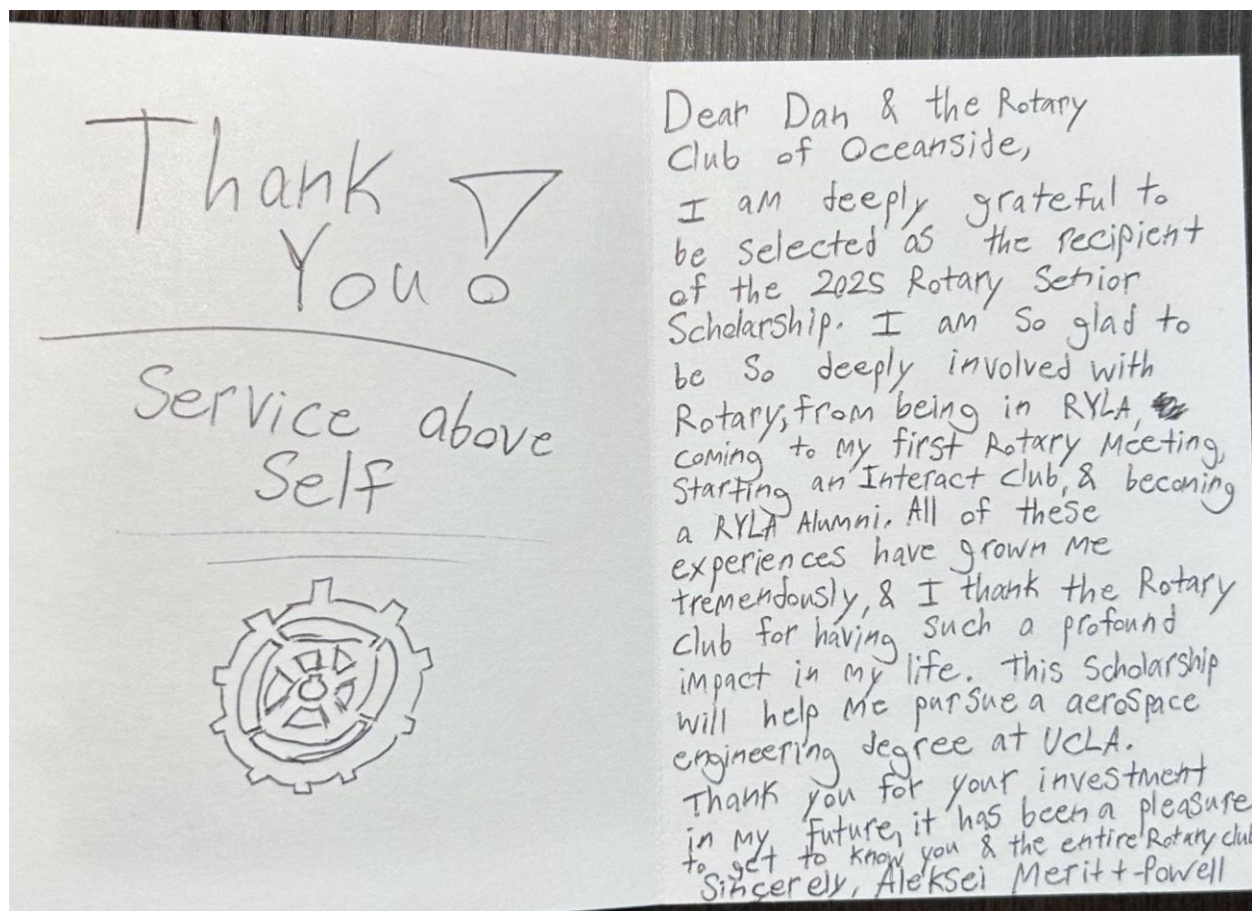
ADJOURNMENT: **RENEE** adjourned the meeting at 1:27 pm.



SHARING A “THANK YOU” NOTE

Thought you would like to see this note sent in to Oceanside Rotary in gratitude from our 2025 Rotary Senior Scholarship winner, **ALEKSEI MERITT-POWELL**. So nice to hear that our funding will make “such a profound impact” in his life as he pursues an aerospace engineering degree at UCLA. We wish **ALEKSEI** all the best!





HOW DID YOU CELEBRATE MOTHER'S AND/OR FATHER'S DAY?

In our next edition of Shorelines, we would like to include a few representative photos and/or stories of how our members were celebrated as Dads or Moms on their days of honor in May and June. If you have photos or tales of how your days were made special, send them in to Shorelines Editor **TOM BRAULT** (tombrault@hotmail.com) If we get a good number of submissions, we will have a special section in our June 27 Demotion newsletter dedicated to sharing some of those special memories.

COMING SOON TO OCEANSIDE ROTARY

Friday, June 27th - Demotion Dinner, El Camino Country Club 5:30pm start. Cost just \$50. Sign up with RENEE now!

Saturday, June 28th - Oceanside Independence Day Parade – Gather at 9am - Details to follow

Friday, July 11th - Rotary Social at JIM SCHRODER's House, featuring
entertainment by DARREL LARSON

Friday, July 25th - AWAY Meeting at Chateau Lake San Marcos, 1560 Circa del
Lago, San Marcos – Look for details in an email when we get closer to that
date