



2025-2026

ROTARY CLUB OF OCEANSIDE

SHORELINES

Tom Brault
Editor-in-Chief

Anchisa Farrant
Photographer

Janet Lacy
Reporter



CO-PRESIDENTS
Roger Vanderwerken
Paul Wendee

March 13, 2026



CO-PRESIDENT PAUL WENDEE

opened the meeting right on time at 12:30. **AG / PP / PE / SEC RENEE RICHARDSON** led us in the **Pledge of Allegiance** and reminded us that, as



we spoke the words, we should reflect on those who have in the past and are currently serving in the military to keep our country safe.

Then **RENEE** was asked to lead us in reciting the **ROTARY 4 WAY TEST** which she did as she placed a blindfold over her eyes to clearly send a message to the rest of us that as Rotarians we should all know by heart and live by our example the words of the **ROTARY 4 WAY TEST** and ask ourselves regarding what we think, say, or do: 1) Is it the truth? 2) Is it fair to all concerned? 3) Will it build goodwill and better friendships? 4) Will it be beneficial to all concerned?



PP TERRI HALL was our Songmeister for the meeting and, showing off her green outfit and asked who among us was Irish this day as we approach St. Patrick's Day. She then led us in song to the tune "When Irish Eyes Are Smiling" followed by our favorite song, "Smile."



CO-PRES ROGER VANDERWERKEN then introduced our guest **ENCINITAS ROTARIAN PAUL DWORK** who recently hosted the Encinitas Rotary "Rotary Creates Magic" show which supported a variety of charities and was attended by many of our members. Also introduced as our guest was **ED PARISH'S** special person in his life, **ANNE SPERAW**.



TERRI HALL then led us in the Welcome Song for our guests.

PRESIDENT PAUL called up our speaker **LESLEE GAUL** to assist him as he bravely performed his own magic trick before the club, magically turning two pieces of string into a single strand. After a somewhat stumbling beginning (much to the amusement of the club), he finally successfully pulled off his magic trick and proudly produced the two separate strings that now had been joined into one.



At the same time, he called up **ENCINITAS ROTARIAN MAGICIAN PAUL DWORK** who profusely thanked those in attendance who attended the Rotary Creates Magic show and presented our club with a check for \$570 (a portion of our tickets sales from the event).



RENEE then also thanked those who had attended the Day of Kings fundraiser in its 27th year in Tijuana, Mexico, with the Rotary Club of Tijuana hosting the celebration created especially for children with special needs including children with autism and their families. **RENEE** shared with us that the event also raises money for children who need hearing aids, as well as providing food, toys, and learning supplies that otherwise would not be available to these kids. She showed us some of the photos from the event and warned any members that if they were contemplating traveling to Mexico by car, that you should have a Sentri Pass (also called a Global Entry Pass) to avoid the otherwise lengthy waiting line to enter the country.



RENEE gave thanks to **DANA ALBERT** for his effort to resurrect our Club's participation in the District-wide music competition for high school students. On Monday, March 9 we hosted two very talented musicians – one pianist and one cello player – at the Concert Hall at MiraCosta College. Attending to enjoy the music and support the young talent were: **DANA, RENEE, ROGER VANDERWERKEN, JAY CRAWFORD and TOM BRAULT**. The contestants both performed admirably, and both were selected to move on to the next level of this District competition.

CO-PRESIDENT PAUL then turned to **Birthdays and Anniversaries** and announced that it was **LAURA BASSETT**'s Birthday on March 12! **LAURA** bounded to the podium and proudly announced that she was 59 years young and rounded up her Happy Dollars to \$60. For those of us who know her mother, **COLLEEN O'HARRA**, she shared that her mother will be 89 years old in April.



Also recognized for a Club Anniversary by **CO-PRESIDENT PAUL** was **ED PARISH** who was celebrating his 13th year with our Oceanside Rotary. At first **ED** questioned this number, for he thought he had been in the club much longer than 13 years, and then he realized that because he was quite “smitten” with his love interest in **ANNE SPERAW** - who was the President of the San Luis Rey Rotary Club over 13 years ago - that he remained with the San Luis Rey Rotary Club for some time before joining ours! **ED** gave \$20 Happy Dollars.



ROGER VANDERWERKEN was recognized for his 7th Anniversary with the Club, and he reminded us that his roots with Rotary actually started much further back when he was selected to be an Exchange Student in his youth and went to Holland for a lifechanging year. He then further shared that two of his children had also been Rotary Exchange students, with his daughter going to Belgium and his son going to Kenya. Thank you, **ROGER! ROGER** was \$52 Happy.

RENEE reminded us that May 16 will be our **Rotarian Epic Day of Service**, which will consist of our participation from 11:00 to 1:30 with the Oceanside Chamber of Commerce's “Operation Appreciation!” which was created by the Chamber in 2002 as a heartfelt event dedicated to honoring and celebrating our military's brave men and women. On **Saturday, May 16th, 2026**, the Oceanside Chamber will bring the community together to provide a day of recognition for active-duty military stationed on Marine Corps Base Camp Pendleton and nearby military bases. Thousands of active-duty military members and their families will be treated to a day of free food, entertainment, and a fun zone for kids. This event will be held at the Junior Seau Pier Amphitheater. Free parking is available in both the Civic Center Parking Structure and the Transit Center parking structure. The fun begins at 11 AM with an opening ceremony and lasts until 4 PM. Numerous dignitaries including Congressman Mike Levin, Assembly Member Laurie Davies, Supervisor Jim Desmond and Mayor Esther Sanchez are expected to take the stage

to welcome the service members. The day features a variety of activities, including a children's fun zone, live music, and free food provided exclusively for active-duty military members and their families. Major food and beverage sponsors include Buffalo Wild Wings, Pick Up Stix, Jersey Mikes, Frazier Farms, Ocean's Eleven Casino, and Urbane Cafe. Our Rotary Club will assist in serving food and drinks, and anything else that needs "hands on" help, from 11:00 to 1:30. If you can participate, please let **RENEE** know.

Happy Dollars

ED PARISH gave \$10 Happy Dollars in honor of the recent loss of **RUDY VAN HUNNICK** and **BOB PICKREL**.



TINA ORTIZ, who had previously worked for a bank, had interacted with **BOB PICKREL** (who was a retired Bank Manager for the Bank of America) and spoke about what a great guy he was and how he was always smiling and in good spirits, and was a master at working well with others. **TINA** gave \$50 to the Rotary Foundation Endowment in his honor.

TERRI HALL gave a check to the Rotary Foundation on behalf of herself and hubby **DAVE** for \$100 and spoke about what a good conversation they had with **BOB** just days before his death. She said simply, "he will be missed."



Guest **MAGICIAN PAUL DWORK** was \$10 Happy because he was going to be a Judge of a Science Fair Project for the topic of Plant Science. He had served in the past as a Judge for Medical Science and really enjoyed it. He said that it only takes about 4 hours on one day once a year and he would encourage members of the club to participate in the Science Fair program. **MAGICIAN PAUL** then disclosed that he and **CO-PRESIDENT PAUL WENDEE** were cabin mates at RYLA.



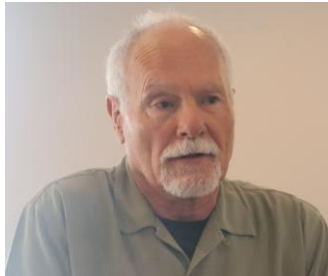
PP VICKIE PROSSER was \$20 Happy that she had attended the wonderful Magic Show, and she brought her program from the event to share with others about the great experience she had. **VICKIE** also shared that she recently had a medical "procedure" and that she was feeling good. She then added that she had come across certain photos of



DAVID NYDEGGER that were very incriminating and that, if given he “right offer,” she just might reveal them to the club. This prompted **DAVID** to admit that at a Rotary Demotion Dinner for **GEORGE BARRANTE** he and former Rotarian **JOHN VERMEREN** were dressed in drag by his wife for a Rotary skit.



RENEE then shared that when **BOB PICKREL'S** wonderful wife died that **BOB** had wanted a big floral Rotary Wheel arrangement to be displayed at her memorial service. **RENEE** gently let him know that although there would be a large floral arrangement provided by Rotary, since his wife had not been a member of Rotary herself, it would not be in the form of a Rotary Wheel. **BOB** understood, but then added that, when he passed, he would like a big floral Rotary Wheel at his service. He then offered to give “money up front” to cover the cost of the arrangement. **RENEE** assured him that he did not need to fund this request.



MIKE WESELOH told us one of **BOB'S** favorite stories. When **BOB** was the manager of the Bank of America, the employees were always arguing about the temperature of the building and coming to him to complain. So, **BOB** devised an ingenious plan. He removed the actual thermostat device from behind the wall, but left the control dial in place. Thereafter, when the employees would come to **BOB** to complain about the temperature, **BOB** just told them to go ahead and change the setting to whatever they wanted – which seemed to please everybody. **MIKE** was \$100 Happy and contributed to the Oceanside Rotarian Club Foundation on behalf of **BOB PICKREL**.

ROGER VANDERWERKEN paid \$5 in memory of **BOB**, followed by **ROTARIAN ANCHISA FARRANT**, who was \$10 Happy, and spoke about how she will also miss **BOB**. **ANCHISA** shared that she and **ERNIE MASCITTI** and **BOB PICKREL** all shared the same birthday month and had lots of photos taken together over the years. **ANCHISA** told us how much she appreciated how **BOB** was always smiling. She also shared that she was heading to Thailand again and will be gone until mid-April or so.

DAVID NYDEGGER then stepped forward to introduce our speaker – the third in a series of presentations to our club from individuals who had worked for him in the past. As part of his introduction, **DAVID** shared that back in about 1998, when he was the head of the Chamber of Commerce, the Transient Occupancy Tax (TOT) for Oceanside was 10% and took in approximately \$860,000. (A Transient

Occupancy Tax, often called a "bed tax" or hotel tax, is a tax levied by local governments (cities or counties) on guests who stay for 30 consecutive days or less in hotels, motels, B&B's, or short-term rentals.) **DAVID** shared that this same tax now brings somewhere around \$18,000,000 into the City's coffers. This increase in revenue is in many ways attributed to the efforts of the Chamber of Commerce and their focus on developing the business revenue for the City of Oceanside. With that, **DAVID** proudly introduced one of many of his previous employees that he had hired during his tenure with the Chamber, **LESLEE GAUL** who is the President and CEO of **VISIT OCEANSIDE**.



LESLEE shared with us that she had traveled the United States with her parents as a child and that she cherished the words of Mark Twain that "Travel is fatal to prejudice, bigotry, and narrow-mindedness." She said that her family was of limited means, and that one of the lessons that she learned is what is important to all of those who travel and what they want to see and experience. **LESLEE** was pleased to announce that the Oceanside Welcome Center managed by Visit Oceanside was awarded the prestigious Poppy Award for best California Welcome Center by Visit California in March 2026. Recognized for excellence in visitor services, the center was honored for its creative, personalized, and "hyper-local" approach to showcasing the city's beach culture.

For over 10 years, the Visit Oceanside team has been promoting our beloved hometown and all of its awesomeness to leisure and group travelers. Visit Oceanside is proud that they influence about one-third of the \$568 million that is generated by visitor spending in Oceanside each year, which supports nearly 3,500 Oceanside jobs. The California Welcome Center - a one-stop shop for visitors' travel, ticketing, and souvenir needs - facilitates the Oceanside Tourism Council which partners with tourism-related businesses on issues impacting tourism and visitor spending, such as group travel, public policy, education, and marketing.



Visit Oceanside has a brand toolkit for Oceanside, stating that a brand is more than a logo. It is the embodiment of how people think and feel about a place. They share that Oceanside is more than just a place, it is "a total vibe." The Visit Oceanside Social Media Toolkit leverage has carefully curated social media profiles by creating unique posts encouraging followers to engage with and learn more about our local businesses, offerings, and experiences. Much more

was presented about saving Oceanside's sand on our beaches and all of the efforts that **LESLIE GAUL** and Visit Oceanside have accomplished in assisting the business-related financial success of our city. For more information, access the Visit Oceanside's website < <https://visitoceanside.org/> > to verify the value of this incredible asset to our city.

At the end of the program, **LESLIE** was presented with a marvelous special "moonstone" plant carefully crafted by our wonderful **ANCHISA FARRANT**.



The meeting was concluded with our **Opportunity Drawing** chance at the \$1,000 jackpot being a gift of sorts to the Birthday Girl **LAURA BASSETT**. However, she did not pull the winning card and generously returned the \$10 consolation prize back to the club!

COMING SOON TO OCEANSIDE ROTARY

Friday March 27 – (Regular Meeting Dark) - Iron Man Service Project - Noon to 5 PM – Jr. Seau Community Center by the Pier - Volunteer for registration

Saturday, March 28 – District Training (San Diego) – 8:00 AM – noon

Friday, April 10 – Regular Meeting – BOB ASHTON – Save Our Sand

Friday, April 24 – Regular Meeting – Speaker TBA

April 24-26 – Multi-District Conference – Chula Vista

Saturday, May 16 – “Epic Day of Service” - Operation Appreciation – volunteer to serve food to servicemembers and their families

Friday, May 22 – Regular Meeting Dark for Memorial Day

Friday, May 29 - Regular Meeting – Speaker TBA

Saturday, May 30 – Goat for Joe Golf Tournament – volunteer to help run this annual fundraiser