



2021-2022

ROTARY CLUB OF OCEANSIDE SHORELINES

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When the magic hour of 12:30 rolled around, the assembled members and guests of Oceanside Rotary heard the words, “Testing... Testing” (spoken by Co-President L.J. FIMBRES) loudly and clearly reverberating in the air. Yes, folks, we are pleased to report that the club has acquired a new and improved P.A. system, so we no longer will have to strain to hear our speakers and/or need to restart the speaker when it would shut itself down after 20 minutes of use. Hallelujah!

RUDY VAN HUNNICK was proud to lead us all in the **Pledge of Allegiance**. (We all know how much RUDY appreciates our United States of America, whose heroic military liberated his occupied homeland during World War II.)

Speaking of liberation, Co-Prez FIMBRES finally made his move on a long overdue subject: His hopes for the liberation of his long-lost gavel, or, as he put it, “I’d like to address the ‘Gavel Grabbler’ ... It’s about time for him (“Indiana Gavel”) to come back to his handler (me).” And yes, L.J. said that he would be happy to make amends for leaving the gavel up for grabs way back when. Here was L.J.’s proposal – A pledge of \$5 to go to the club for every person in attendance at the meeting who was wearing a Rotary pin or hat or some other item bearing the Rotary logo. As it turned out, a whopping 18 individuals were sporting the Rotary wheel, so L.J.’s pledge added up to a whopping \$90. Past President JAY CRAWFORD noted that, “I had to write a special song to get my gavel back”, but L.J. did not seem to be inclined to sweeten the pot with any sort of musical offering, so the simple \$90 in cash may have to suffice. Of course, our adventurous friend “Indy” reportedly already has some travel plans in the works. (Rumor has it that he might be making a trip to the far off wild and exotic jungle in a place called New Orleans.) So, the bottom line is that L.J. might have to wait for a bit before he can see his gavel again. This seems only fair, since we all had to wait SO DANGED LONG for him to make any form of apology or plea for its return. Stay tuned to the continuing saga of “Indiana Gavel and his Last Crusades of Travel.”





As fate would have it, Indy's frequent (but not constant) host during his absence from official Oceanside Rotary table banging duties – JANET BLEDSOE LACY – was called forth next to give us a **Rotary Moment**. It was a surprise to absolutely no one when JANET rejoiced in the fact that all of March is Women's History Month, and she took this opportunity to “cherish this moment that we are witnessing in history”, specifically referencing the current news about the first nomination of an African

American woman to serve on the Supreme Court of the United States. JANET started out by reading a litany of “firsts” for the Supreme Court: the first Jewish appointment (Louis Brandeis in 1916), the first African American (Thurgood Marshall in 1967), the first woman S.C. Justice (Sandra Day O'Connor in 1981), and the first Hispanic justice on the nation's highest court (Sonia Sotomayor in 2009). And now with the nomination of Ketanji Brown Jackson (who also happens to be the first nominee with experience as a federal public defender), as well as California's appointment of San Diego Appellate Court Judge Patricia Guerrero to the California Supreme Court (its first Latina), history is being made again right now in the present day. “We cannot underestimate the importance of having diversity in our positions of importance in our society, and to have those positions filled by people who look like America.... Racial, religious, and gender stereotypes are reinforced when we do not have diversity in our schools, and our teachers, and our workplaces, and in our courts. The ‘first’ black woman justice of the Federal Supreme Court and our first Latina Justice being appointed to our state Supreme Court are important to all of America, and to all of those little girls who look like them, who are growing up, and are being taught, ‘You can do this, too!’” Thank you, JANET, for these inspiring insights!

Before she launched into our **Club Updates**, Co-President Elect RENEE RICHARDSON, with a twinkle in her eye and pride in her soul, said, “Add to JANET's prestigious list of firsts: “RENEE RICHARDSON – First female president of the Oceanside Rotary Club” (in 1994).

RENEE reminded us that we can always access the latest news about upcoming events on our club's website (oceansidecarotary.org). And then she read off just a few highlights of Rotary opportunities on the horizon.



- 16 members have signed up to serve as volunteers for the registration / check-in process from 1 to 6 pm on April 1 for the Ironman Oceanside event. An email with details will be sent out to the volunteers shortly.
- April 8 – Regular meeting at the El Camino Country Club patio
- April 22 – Special Away meeting at Breakwater Community Church
- (She didn't mention it at this meeting, but we might as well remind you here that our annual Rotarians at Work (RAW) Day is Saturday April 30, so make sure it is on your personal calendar.)

Introduction of Visiting Rotarians and Guests:

DAVE HALL had the pleasure of sitting with two folks who would be called upon to accept donations from us later in the meeting: FRANCISCO FLORES from North County Lifeline and FREDDIE CHAVARRIA, now the Vice Principal at Oceanside High. ERNIE MASCITTI made sure everyone knew that RUDY VAN HUNNICK had joined us for our meeting again, and Co-President A.J. MAZZARELLA introduced our guest speaker for the day, DESIREE PEREZ. The other Co-President L.J. scanned the crowd to select a suitable Songmeister. He asked whether either BILL DERN or TOM BRAULT (who happened to be seated next to each other) wanted to do the honors. The two decided to do a duet together as “Outlaws” (a play on the fact that they now are in-laws), and TOM bravely invented a high register tenor harmony for our Welcome Song on the spot. While they were sitting back down, BILL was heard to mutter to his pal, “Showoff!!”



ANOTHER Pin added to the Foundation Banner

Still in “catchup” mode for recognizing folks who have hit the \$1,000 threshold over the past couple of years to our Oceanside Rotary Club Foundation, its president BILL DERN called ERNIE MASCITTI up to be applauded for joining the ranks of the President’s Fellows. Congratulations and thanks, ERNIE!



Then BILL reported to the club two of the most recent donations approved by the Club Foundation’s board: \$2,000 to purchase laptop computers to help Afghan refugees get connected as they are settling in to their new homes here in America, and another \$10,000 committed to support the needs of individuals being displaced from Ukraine because of the harrowing attacks by the Russian Army. Our Rotary District 5340 is collecting money to send over to a district in the neighboring country of Romania. Having fellow Rotarians on the ground managing these funds right in the area where this critical support is needed will help ensure that our contribution will be used efficiently and effectively. So be assured that you can (and should) make regular contributions to our Oceanside Rotary Club Foundation, knowing that its board is conscientiously shepherding these funds well to ensure that our donations that come from the interest and earnings spun off of the Foundation’s endowment account will truly make a difference!

Paul Harris Presentation – Another member reached a total of a second \$1,000 in donations to the Rotary International Foundation, thus earning the coveted “Paul Harris plus One” pin. DAN WILSON was called forward to receive his recognition, and RENEE proudly noted that DAN has recently completed his required tasks as a new(ish) member to earn his blue badge and can



“finally put your red badge away ... He’s a big boy now!” (Observant attendees made note of the fact that this might not be that big of a deal to him, since DAN was not wearing any badge at all at this meeting. Ooops!)

District Matching Grants

DAVE HALL came to our newly improved microphone to announce that the last of the grant funds for this Rotary year were being put to good use.

First he called forth FRANCISCO FLORES (the Program Manager of the afterschool activities at North County Lifeline) to receive a check for \$750 which will make up the leis formed out of 50 one dollar bills each that our club donates to each of the kids in the Lifeline’s program who graduate from Oceanside High. Last year there were 9 leis, and this year it looks like it will be 6 grads. (9 plus 6 = 15, and 15 times \$50 = \$750) FRANCISCO told us, “It’s a pleasure being here ... and not just for the free meal!” He also told us how some of the grads have been so touched and moved when they received these rewards from us that they have chosen to leave their dollars in the leis instead of taking them apart to use the cash, because seeing the lei is a reminder to them that the community values them for their accomplishments as individuals. How about that!?!



DAVE then told us that, due to the pandemic, money that had been budgeted from the district grant to cover the costs of our Crown Heights mentor events for middle schoolers was not spent in this year. So we asked FREDDIE CHAVARRIA (former Principal at Laurel Elementary where we had donated library books over the years and now the Vice Principal at Oceanside High) how he might recommend we could best use those funds to support his school’s programs. Per

FREDDIE’s suggestions, we presented OHS with a check for: \$1,000 for library books plus a number of donations for learning incentives for OHS students: \$600 in restaurant and movie cards (McD’s, Swami’s, Fat Joes, Regal Cinemas), plus a \$500 to the OHS Associated Student Body to purchase “Pirate Wear” to give to deserving students.



Piggybacking on FRANCISCO’s comment earlier, FREDDIE added, “I just enjoy being able to have lunch! ... At work, there usually is no time for me to eat.” He mentioned that this year’s OHS valedictorian named ADRIAN, who was just selected, came from Laurel Elementary, and FREDDIE firmly believes that our club’s mentorship program, which exposes middle school students to experiences and programs that could be opportunities for them in their lives if they apply themselves, truly helps and inspires students like ADRIAN to excel. “It makes a difference!” FREDDIE also acknowledged that “This has been a very challenging year.” A lot of students have been out of classes for two full years, and the number of students who are struggling in their studies has doubled or even tripled. That is why they want to put this

incentive program in place. Since the school has limited resources (and the district has some policy restrictions on the expenditures of funds), support from the community (like from Rotary) is crucial for making these rewards to students possible. Isn't it nice to know what great things our money is doing for the youth and the community of Oceanside? ... It sure is! So let's raise some MORE money through...

Happy \$\$\$\$

TINA ORTIZ asked the rhetorical question, "Do you ever get the feeling that it's going to be a great day? And then you remember, it's a Rotary day", which makes it even greater? That's how she felt today, so she gave \$10 just for being here ...

ERNIE MASCITTI put another \$50 into the Oceanside Rotary Club Foundation coffers, "happy to wake up on this side of the dirt." ...

RUDY VAN HUNNICK gave his traditional \$25 contribution, this time because he is "91 and still happy!" ...

DAN WILSON was \$5 proud that our club (and its Foundation) stepped up so well to support the Ramadan food drive for sugar and honey for 2,500 Afghan refugees. This food drive goal has been reached. Hooray! ...

ANCHISA FARRANT spread her \$5 in Happy Dollars to cover a couple of items: To thank TOM BRAULT for arranging the "Rotary at the Moonlight" event to see "Ragtime" in August / To crow that she is the "first Asian member of the club" / and for the "wonderful five days" she had in Colorado.

BILL DERN gave \$10 to celebrate that his son MARK and MARK's wife (and TOM BRAULT's daughter) ROBYN were currently on the road to join friends and family at a baby shower in their honor, to be followed by a "babymoon" – a last shot at privacy just as a couple for the soon-to-be parents - for a couple of nights at a resort on Mission Bay ...





JACQUELINE BROWNEE confessed that she had missed the club's celebration of her birthday, and to make amends, she contributed a cool \$100 to the Oceanside Rotary Club Foundation. (Wow! You can miss your birthday at Rotary as often as you want, JACQUELINE!!) ...

ROGER VANDERWERKEN, apparently in a dig at hearing about all these "female firsts" earlier in the meeting, gave \$5 to note that his class at the Naval Academy was the last to be "all male." ...

TOM BRAULT added \$5 to his In-law ("Outlaw") BILL's comments about their kids' upcoming babymoon to lament that their first day at Mission Bay will be grey with a 90 to 100% chance of rain. Sigh. Ah well. They will make the best of it, I'm sure!



Program



What better speaker to have for our last meeting in Women's History Month than a representative of the Girl Scouts of America? DESIREE PEREZ has been the Corporate Relations Officer of the Girl Scouts of San Diego since November of 2021, and her primary mission in that job is to increase their corporate support. Earlier in her career, she worked in the professional sports industry for organizations like the Columbus Blue Jackets, Nashville Soccer Club, Phoenix Suns, and the San Diego Padres. She earned her Bachelor's Degree in Sports Administration with a minor in Business Administration. DESIREE and her husband STEVE currently reside in Carlsbad.

As DESIREE sees it, March's Women's History Month is "a great time to pivot and focus on female empowerment, and the Girl Scouts is one of the best leadership opportunities for girls", from kindergarten through 12th grade. A great feature of the modern-day Girl Scouts' structure is that the troops stay together through all of their years in the organization, which leads to strong, lifelong friendships.



There are just under 15,000 Girl Scouts in San Diego and Imperial Counties, supported by about 8,000 adult volunteers. Over 50% of the girls come from diverse backgrounds, and a significant proportion come from low to moderate income households. Financial aid to cover fees are available, thanks to generous donors, so the Girl Scouts can welcome one and all to join. They have an active outreach program in which bilingual staff members go to underserved areas to spread the word of this opportunity, educating girls and their parents about what can be made available to them through the Scouting.

Girl Scouts focus on 4 Pillars, or principal programs, and girls get to choose what aspects of the opportunities available they will actively participate in.

- 1) STEM – Trying to narrow the gender gap in scientific fields by offering targeted programs, such as their Science of Flight studies, sponsored by Southwest Airlines. In another example of a long-term life payoff for participation in scouting, a young girl who took a coding class through Girl Scouts went on to major in computer sciences.
- 2) OUTDOORS – The San Diego area Girl Scouts offers resident camp and day camp experiences. (Registration for one of their most recent overnight camps sold out in just 45 minutes and has a wait list of 700 girls eager to join in, if possible.) There are two resident camp facilities in Julian and day camps in both Balboa and Escondido.
- 3) LIFE SKILLS – Mentorship opportunities are available, including their “Cool Women” event, featuring five local female leaders who talk about how their Girl Scout experience prepared them for where they are now in their lives. An “Emerging Leaders” seminar is also offered.
- 4) ENTREPRENEURSHIP – Through the Girl Scouts’ legendary Cookie Sales program, girls learn goal setting, people skills, organizational skills, and money management techniques. This year, the scourge of “supply chain issues” impacted these sales, resulting in cookie shortages, but individual girls have found ways to team up and work through some of the complicating issues.

DESIREE invited each of us to consider partnering with the Girl Scouts in whatever ways you might choose, from financial support, to active volunteering, or even just by encouraging young girls in your life to look into what joining a Girl Scout troop might offer them. This year, in adjusting to the pandemic, the organization has had to deal with an unexpected expense of \$500,000 to cover the cost of LifeScan background checks for volunteers, so help is needed now more than ever.

We then opened the floor up to questions from the audience.

JANET BLEDSOE LACY asked if there had been, or would be, a merger of the Boys Scouts and Girl Scouts. The two organizations remain as separate entities. The Boy Scouts now do allow girls to join their troops, but this has not impacted the Girl Scouts whatsoever.

ROGER VANDERWERKEN wondered what amount of each box of cookies sold goes toward programs. Of the \$5 to \$6 cost per box, about 75% stays with the troop that sells them.

DAN WILSON asked how many troops there are in the area currently. DESIREE was not sure on that particular number.

Then RUDY VAN HUNNICK double checked on the age range of girls participating in scouting – Kindergarten through 12th grade.

BILL DERN inquired whether both men and women could serve as volunteers for the Girl Scout troops, and the answer is “Yes.”

TINA ORTIZ told the story of how her daughter, when she was at the prime age to become a Girl Scout, chose not to join because she absolutely, positively did not want to have to sell cookies. Therefore, TINA is glad to hear that this is now an optional activity.

With our spirits raised and our questions answered, Co-President L.J. presented DESIREE with our parting gift for our speaker – a beautiful potted succulent, lovingly prepared by ANCHISA FARRANT, who really has a green thumb for these plants.



The **Opportunity Drawing** had everyone checking their tickets, and the lucky number of 124839 was exactly one number off from the strip of three which I had bought before the meeting. So close, and yet so far! ROGER VANDERWERKEN, who must have bought his tickets right after me, asked for a confirmation of which card he was looking for to score the big bucks (... the Joker) and then he asked us all to “Say your prayers” on his behalf. Alas, the King that he drew may have been “Kind of close”, as L.J. put it, but still only netted ROGER the \$10 consolation prize.



With all of our regular business then concluded, Co-Prez L.J. adjourned our meeting early, inviting members to “feel free to mingle” and adding his personal hopes that “I’ll get my gavel back soon enough.” We shall see, L.J. ... We shall see.

INDIANA GAVEL TRAVEL UPDATE

You may think that nothing had been going on with our friend Indiana Gavel since it has been a few months since our last report on him. But that does not mean that he has just been sitting in a drawer somewhere, waiting for Co-President L.J. FIMBRES to come to his senses and beg for his return to active duty. Au contraire! Indy has been out and about with the best of them!

Here we see our dedicated Rotary gavel attending the March 19th District Training Assembly. He was paying such close attention from his seat in the



seminar along with Past President MELISSA RODRIGUEZ. “Indy had a great time at the Assembly and learned a lot!”, MELISSA reported. In fact, Indy was such a model participant in the training assembly that he drew the attention of our District Governor Elect CHUCK PRETTO who was proud to pose for a perfectly positioned pic with our poor, purloined podium pounder. And, if the rumors are true, Indy’s dance card is already quite full going forward, with more than a few other trips which have been in the planning stages. So yeah, L.J. ... It might be a while until you get him back in your grasp, despite the \$90 pledge you made at this last meeting.



COMING SOON TO OCEANSIDE ROTARY

4/1 Volunteer Opportunity at Ironman Oceanside check-in. Those who signed up should be on the lookout for details to follow on the “Who, What, When, Where, and How”

4/8 Regular Meeting – El Camino Country Club patio

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

4/30 Rotarians at Work Day featuring two different service projects. (Oceanside Cemetery cleanup and a “sprucing up” of the garden area at Del Rio Elementary), with lunch to follow at Breakwater Community Church.

