



ROTARY CLUB of La Jolla *News Bulletin*

8-22-24

**Michael Semanchik, Exec Dir., The INNOCENCE CENTER
“How Technology Aided in Recent Releases/Exonerations.”**



The Innocence Center (TIC) founded in 2023 by **Jan Stiglitz**, is dedicated to addressing the issue of wrongful convictions. The organization operates with a clear three-part mission: to free the innocent from prison, assist the innocent as they reenter society, and educate the public on the causes of wrongful conviction. By tackling these goals, TIC aims to not only rectify individual miscarriages of justice but also to foster a more informed and

Michael Semanchik, the Executive Director of TIC, has dedicated his career to fighting for justice and exonerating the wrongfully convicted. His efforts have led to the freedom of a dozen innocent individuals who, collectively,

served more than 600 years in prison for crimes they did not commit. Notably, he played a pivotal role in the exoneration of NFL icon Brian Banks, earning him the coveted title of Attorney of the Year from California Lawyer Magazine in 2013. Michael's influence extends beyond courtrooms, as he has shared his wisdom at educational institutions and appeared frequently in the media. Hailing from Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, Michael Semanchik embodies the relentless pursuit of justice.

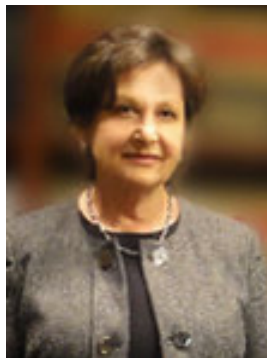
Semanchik's expertise and commitment have made him a prominent voice in the movement against wrongful convictions, frequently speaking in the media, universities, and classrooms to raise awareness and educate the public on this critical issue. In 2014, the *San Diego Daily Transcript* recognized Semanchik in its list of "Top Attorneys."



Important, our next Luncheon on August 27th will be held at the Living Room, 1205 Prospect. Please RSVP to Natasha Vossen's email: nataschavossen@san.rr.com

Last Week's Meeting

President Barbara Brown called our meeting to order





and **Bob Pecora** led us in the Pledge of allegiance and offered a simple but timeless reflection about gratitude.

He noted that we should always recognize how blessed we all are, and how grateful each of us should be. An “attitude of gratitude” should become our mantra.

Guests:



Barbara Bry, a Rotarian from Club 22 and a former San Diego City Councilperson.

John Donaldson brought his wife, **Karin**, an avid Padres fan and a fan of John for over 50 years of marriage.



Cindy Goodman introduced **Talyssa d'Avila** our new club applicant, who recently attended a Rotary Community Service event at the Air and Space Museum to help assemble care packages for Navy personnel about to be deployed.



Chuck Marsh introduced **Bill Eldridge**, an avid Padres fan, recently relocated to San Diego from McCall, Idaho.

Chuck and Nan also introduced their guest, **Dan McSweeney**, another rabid Padres fan. It quickly became apparent that Randy Jones still generates quite a following.

Happy Bucks\$\$\$

Penny Shurtleff offered a donation given to honor her husband, **Gordon**, whose Torrey Pines Rotary Club recently celebrated their 60th anniversary. Incidentally, our Rotary Club of La Jolla sponsored the new club and nurtured it through its formative years.

Announcements

Pat Stouffer and **Bill Meanley** were recognized as the only Rotarians present that remember attending a baseball game at **San Diego's Lane Field**. Lane field was the home of the Pacific Coast minor league Padres from 1936-1957. Since Lane Field was abandoned over 67 years ago, Pat and Bill's memories are still apparently intact, likely Prevacen-free, and to be applauded. However, we did fail to ask them what they ate for breakfast yesterday or where they parked their cars....

Community Service



Denise McGuire, Community Service Chair, did a show and tell of our brand-new blue "**Rotary of La Jolla**" volunteer shirts that were premiered at our District Rotary's "**Operation Gratitude**". She said, there are enough shirts for all our club members to proudly wear at our future community service events.

"Operation Gratitude" was a two-day Rotary District Project, to provide 5000 care packages for sailors about to be deployed on the **USS George Washington**

Denise, along with district governor **Diane Crawford**, our new member applicant **Talyssa** and her husband, **Cindy Goodman** and **Chuck Marsh** as well as 100s more, all pitched in to assemble the care packages last Tuesday afternoon.

The **USS George Washington** is a Nimitz-class aircraft carrier. It will soon succeed **USS Ronald Reagan (CVN 76)** as the forward-deployed U.S. Naval Forces Japan aircraft carrier at Fleet Activities Yokosuka, Japan for a 3-year deployment. That ship, and those 5,000 young sailors is what Community Service is all about.



Unhappy News

Chuck Dick let us know that **Jeanine Volinski**, a longtime member of our club, recently passed away at age 71. She and her husband, Carl, ran a successful insurance agency in La Jolla for many years. Jeanine was remembered as a true fireball, a go-getter with unlimited energy.

Her obituary noted: “Jeanine was known for her indomitable spirit, never recognizing the words “no” and “I can’t”. Her zest for life was complemented by a passion for helping others, whether solving a problem or creating an adventure. Her commitment to anything she took on was inspirational. She was a member of both Rotary and Kiwanis Clubs. “

It was also noted with great sadness that **John Vaughan’s** first wife, **Margaret Lamb Vaughan**, also recently died at the age of 99. Among her many accomplishments she became a real estate agent, a licensed psychotherapist, a world traveler, and the mother of four including **Nancy Vaughan O’Neal**. Nancy and her husband John O’Neal, serve as regular volunteer teachers in our TJ Scholars lab. May Margaret rest in peace.



Our Speaker Last Week

Bob Teaff proudly introduced **Randy Jones**, a true San Diego institution, who has played and worked within the San Diego Padres organization for over 51 years.



Randy Jones

Though Randy's voice is somewhat hoarse due to vocal cord problems, his love for the Padres has not diminished over these many years. His many milestones include:

- Attending every Padre home game
- Working with multiple past-owners from **C. Arnold Smith** to the recently departed **Peter Seidler**. As he noted some owners were better than others, and some "didn't have a clue what they were doing." Randy wisely did not elaborate.
- Pitching the shortest game in the history of the major leagues
- Winning the **Cy Young Award**
- Helping to greet and help feed the 3 million attendees to Padres games expected this year. His Randy Jones BBQ is worth the wait in line.

Randy grew up in Orange County where his Brea pee wee league team were champs in 1957. He attended **Chapman College**, but baseball was his passion. He pitched 20 games in the minors before being called up by the Padres in 1974. In his first year he recorded 8 wins against 22 loses, which wasn't too bad since the team lost a total of 124 games that year. He redeemed himself the next year with 20 wins, an all-star selection, as well as being named "**comeback player of the year**"! **What a turnaround!**

Randy highlighted the many changes he's seen in the current game of baseball. Pitching a complete game was commonplace in his day, whereas today a pitcher is viewed as imminently successful if he makes it to the 6th inning. Randy pitched 25 complete games in 1976! The money available to a ballplayer today far exceeds what was paid when Randy played, but "all the money on earth" could not compensate for the joy he experienced during his career. Today power hitting and home run production dominate the game of baseball, but Randy made a very good living as a left hander throwing a "junk" slider at 74 mph. In 1973 while pitching in the Texas League he learned how to "roll over" the ball by twisting his hand and wrist in a certain way. He soon realized that the slower the ball was pitched the more his slider would drop; his slider actually improved when his arm naturally tired in the later innings. He was a master at inducing ground balls, which led to fast games and more than ample hitter frustration. He noted that Pete Rose was especially frustrated when facing Jones, particularly when he struck out on three straight sliders. Randy admitted that the first time he faced

Willy Mays and Hank Aaron, they both took him deep. He did salvage some satisfaction from his rude awakening by getting signed baseballs from both of these Hall-of Fame hitters. He cherishes those signed baseballs to this day.

Randy Jones continues to enrich our San Diego community through **The Randy Jones Foundation**. His 12-year-old foundation helps talented 13–18-year-olds with athletic skills in various sports that lack the financial resources needed to join traveling teams. The kids often come from military families who cannot afford the cost that additional experience and training requires. The Randy Jones Foundation offers \$5000 to help these athletes succeed. His foundation also hosts young athletes at Petco Park monthly.

It is safe to say that everyone at the meeting, (as well as some of the **La Valencia** valets who listened in) came away with new insights **into Randy Jones** as a person, a better understanding of his contributions to our San Diego community, and his tenacious devotion to Padre baseball. We are proud to call him a 'San Diego Institution'!

Coming in Two Weeks, September 3rd.



Chief Judge Dana Makoto Sabraw of the United States District Court, Southern District, San Diego.

Chief Reporter and Photographer - Davis Cracraft
Copy Editor- Denise McGuire