



ROTARY CLUB of La Jolla

BITS of News

12.14.23

**COMING ON DECEMBER 20th
AT THE LA VALENCIA, OUR ANNUAL
EVENING CHRISTMAS PARTY FROM
5:30 to 9:30**



**In anticipation of the busy holiday season,
there will be no Rotary meetings on
December 19th, 26th and January 2nd.**



See you in 2024 !

Our Last Meeting's Highlights:



INSPIRATION & PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

Pat Stouffer, opened the meeting with these wise words...

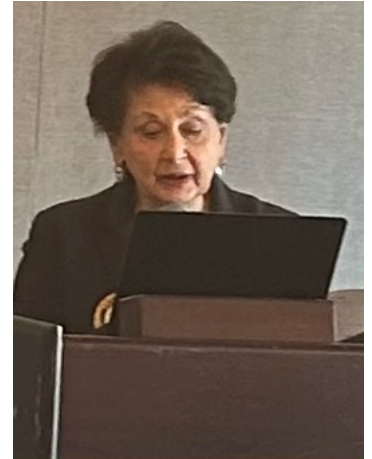
“Happiness is not getting everything you want, Instead, it is in being happy with everything you have”

Pat then led us in the Pledge of Allegiance



ANNOUNCEMENTS By President Brown

Barbara Brown reminded everyone our **Christmas party** on the 20th, will be a terrific one, and if anyone hasn't RSVP'd and still wants to come, contact Natasha Vossen, and see if she can work a little magic. **Barbara** then passed around envelopes for us to contribute tips for our wonderful waiters who will serve us at the Christmas Party.



GUESTS:



Bob Teaff introduced Mia Suni, Steve Avoyer's business associate, Mia assisted Steve with his slide show presentation.

HAPPY \$\$\$

Claire Reiss offered **\$100** worth of **happiness** to celebrate her granddaughter's sophomore year at Duke University.





In a surprise move, lyrics to **“The Christmas Song”** were suddenly passed out among us. **Bill Burch** then took the podium and led us in an impromptu sing along Christmas carol. We sounded pretty good, and amazingly, were mostly in tune!

Bill Burch then gave **the second reading** of the Proposed Slate of Officers and Directors for the 2024 and 2025 Rotary Year, and asked each candidate to stand.

PROPOSED SLATE OF OFFICERS & DIRECTORS

President – Barbara Brown (7/1/24 to 12/31/24) and Bob Teaff (1/1/25 to 6/30/25)

President Elect –Russell King (To serve as President from July 1, 2025)

Secretary – Wade Aschbrenner

Treasurer – Pat Stouffer

Director of Youth Service – Craig Schnepf

Director of International Service – Anya Singleton

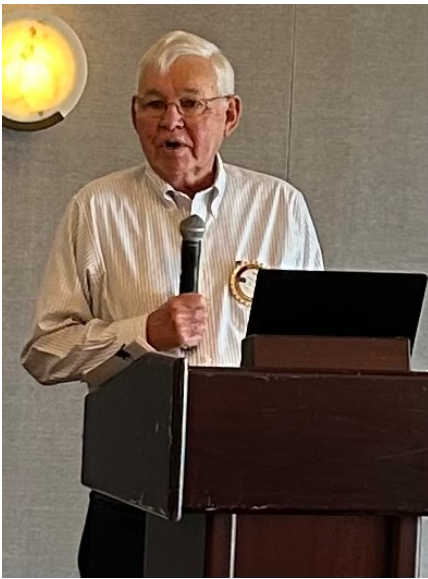
Director of Vocational Service – Vince Glorioso

Director of Community Service – Denise McGuire

Director of Club Service – Kevin Gott

WHO AM I ???

ORRIN L GABSCH



Orrin began his personal story, by telling us, he is someone who likes to have fun, is competitive, and absolutely agrees with the song lyrics by Garth Brooks, “Some of God’s greatest gifts are our unanswered prayers.” In all, he believes he has been blessed and lives the American dream.

Orrin was born on a rural farm in Cleveland Wisconsin, a very small town in Wisconsin. His 8 years of elementary school was spent in a one room school with a class of 6. He had the same teacher, Mrs. Voss for all 8 grades.

High school was spent at Sheboygan Hi, where his class size was now 460 students. He had no favorite subjects however his close friends were taking biology and algebra, so he decided he too would sign up for those classes, later moving into chemistry. He did well in high school, and when he graduated, his Dad took him aside and told him, he had decided to pay Orrin’s way thru college as the family had only one farm, and he thought Orin’s brother, who was not as good a student would be better suited to farm work and so had decided to leave the farm to him.

Early on at the University of Wisconsin, Orin was asked what subjects he had liked in high school and he said algebra and chemistry. He was told he should study chemical engineering. He tried it for two years, wasn’t keen on it, and then was told maybe he should try majoring in pharmaceutical studies which he did.

During his time at the University, he had an accident, requiring him to convalesce for a time. With free time on his hands, and wanting to have some fun, he decided to pledge a popular fraternity on the beautiful shores of Lake Mendota. That decision led to meeting a lovely young California girl, Karen. He really liked Karen, but learned she had a boyfriend in California.

Undeterred he decided he would nonetheless work to win her over. He succeeded, and they married in July 1966.

Initially, he and Karen moved to Dubuque Iowa, where he started his career as a licensed pharmacist. Dubuque was less than ideal and they started to think about going to California where Karen had grown up. In 1958, they decided to move here, and once again he was required to sit for a State Pharmacy license. Fortunately, he passed, and began his career anew in La Jolla. His goal was to own his own pharmacy. Eventually he did, becoming majority owner of Burns Pharmacy.

It was the best time to be in pharmacy work. There was no Insurance, transactions were all in cash, and Burns had over 2,000 charge accounts. During his time at Burns, he bought a software program for their computer. He later learned the software company was failing and had filed for Bankruptcy. He went to the Bankruptcy court, bought out the business opening up a new business avenue, that led to him to eventually becoming Vice President of Pacific Pharmacy Computers, a thriving business today.

Over the years, Orrin also has also served our La Jolla community in various leadership positions, including President of the La Jolla Town Council, Member of the Board of Directors of “Promote La Jolla”, Trustee of the La Jolla Community Planning Association, Advisory Board Member of Stevens Cancer Center- Scripps Memorial Hospital, board Member of our La Jolla Rotary, as well as being active in his Church affairs. (Ed. note: Orrin didn’t tell us this side of him, nonetheless this reporter thinks it is an important part of who he is)

Eventually, he sold his interest in Burns because he and Karen wanted to travel more. He also bought a summer home in Coeur D’Álene, Idaho. Two years ago Karen passed away from cancer. Today, aside from participating in Rotary, he currently is on the Scripps Advisory Board, and The National Cowboys Board and Western Heritage Museum in Oklahoma city.

From being raised on a small rural farm in Wisconsin, to the opportunities of receiving a University education, marrying a lovely young woman, moving to La Jolla and owning his own pharmacy, Orrin has lived the American Dream. Today, the trajectory of his life enables him to spend his summers in beautiful Coeur d’Alene and winters in La Jolla. It’s been a good ride.



Last Week's Speaker, Steve Avoyer; Commercial Real Estate in San Diego Today.

Former Rotary President, **Bob Teaff** introduced **Steve Avoyer**, telling us of Steve's impressive credentials.

Steve has lived in La Jolla for 45 years. He began his real estate career at Coldwell Banker. In 1985 he opened his own commercial real estate company, **Flocke and Avoyer**. Since its founding, his firm has done 5,500 transactions amounting to nearly \$ 6 billion in Leases and Sales. They are the exclusive listing agents for 100 shopping centers, holding 10 million Sq. Feet in retail space.

Once at the podium, Steve gave us a compelling view of commercial real estate today in San Diego, as well as current future projects.



He began with La Jolla, telling us the riveting story of saving the oldest bookstore in America, **Warwick's Book Store**.

In February 2021, Steve was negotiating Warwick's lease for Nancy Warwick, when her landlord, advised him they had been offered an unsolicited bid of \$8.3 million in cash to purchase the Warwick building. They intended to take accept it but would give the Warwick Family 30 days to meet the offer. Steve called Nancy with the bad news. She told him, her family did not have that kind of money.

With her agreement he decided to reach out to La Jolla resident and Warwick's customer Jack McGrory, who manages a real estate investment company, for help. Together they were able to pool the necessary funds, \$8.35 million, from 25 local families within the allotted 30 days, as well as give Nancy a 10-year lease, with two 5-year options. Today, Warwick's is thriving. Indeed, Steve stated, Girard Avenue too, is doing ok.

In general terms, the biggest threat to success for California real estate today is the extensive governmental controls. In San Diego it takes 3 years to get permit approval, government continues to control what to build and where to build it. Lately, there have made changes to city density, requiring greater density without parking, which was unheard of in the past. On the labor side, government also controls minimum wages as well as Union bidding contracts.

As to Retail itself today, generally shopping centers are up, as are online sales. Consumer confidence however is somewhat shaky, though High Street retail is up as is the retail shopping experience, such as the UTC Shopping Mall.

There are possible challenges to this picture, markets do rapidly change, for example, men's clothing, which today has moved from "business attire" to "casual attire" for nearly all events. Further there is the perennial question of sustaining brick and mortar, with the impact of the high cost of gas on travel, the significant issue of consumer safety, in the recent lax era of criminal prosecution, as well as the effect of interest rates on credit cards etc.

For now, though, San Diego real estate appears safe. Currently, several massive projects are in the works here in San Diego. Seaport Village is undergoing tremendous changes which will make it a magnet to consumers and visitors. RaDD Corporation is building a 10-acre mixed use center on Harbor Drive downtown that will offer office, lab, and retail Space. The Watermark Corporation too is building a 275,000-foot retail space above I-15, to capture shoppers in the Mira Mesa, Scripps Ranch, and Poway areas. Optimism in the San Diego area continues to show impressive signs of strength.



