



Chartered October 26, 1925
Wednesday 12:00 noon
La Mesa Community Center
4975 Memorial Drive
La Mesa, CA 91942

Board Members

President Bonnie Welch
President-elect
Gabriella Misirlioglu
Past President
Becki Schwartz
Secretary Kathy Olsen
Treasurer Ryan Barnhill

Board Members

Directors

Dale Bailey
Marsha Darling
Mary Elington
Greg Erickson
Mike Fellows
Louise Herr-Marshall

Membership

Greg Erickson

Youth Service

Mark Matthews

Speaker Chair

Bill Ashman



THE MAGIC
OF ROTARY



A Look Back at Service: Mike Fellows Shares His U.S. Air Force Experience



Mike Fellows

We were honored to hear from our very own Mike Fellows, who shared stories from his time in the U.S. Air Force in the early 1970s. Mike was stationed in South Dakota at one of the Minuteman Missile sites, serving in a role that required extraordinary precision, discipline, and calm under pressure.

Mike's assignment placed him 160 feet underground in a launch control center, where he and his fellow officer monitored Minuteman II missiles, each equipped with four warheads. These intercontinental ballistic missiles—capable of traveling 15,000 miles per hour over the North Pole—were a central component of the nation's strategic deterrence during the Cold War. The missiles were housed in hardened silos and connected by reinforced cables to the underground control centers where two-person crews stood continuous alert.

In addition to his operational duties, Mike wrote procedural manuals and trained incoming crews. While the teams were responsible for monitoring and readiness, they did not control the targets or the broader war plan.

Mike described surviving his intense 24-40-hour shifts with the help of 34 cups of coffee a day, plenty of reading, and correspondence courses. His determination paid off—during this period, he earned his master's degree from South Dakota State University.

South Dakota's missile sites were deactivated after the Cold War ended in 1991.

Mike's presentation offered a fascinating glimpse into a unique chapter of American history.

Upcoming Programs

March 4, 2026

La Daryn Lockett
Environment Ed Community Impact

Lunch Assignments

March 4, 2026

Greeter Kathy Olsen
Pledge Becki Schwartz
Thought Gabriela Misirlioglu
4 Way Test Greg Erickson

March 11, 2026

Greeter Mary Elington
Pledge Kathy Olsen
Thought Becki Schwartz
4 Way Test Gabriela Misirlioglu

March 18, 2026

Greeter Maggie Eggers
Pledge Mary Elington
Thought Kathy Olsen
4 Way Test Becki Schwartz

Please exchange with someone if you're unable to perform your assignment.

Little League Opening Day



All Hands-on Deck needed for Little League Opening Day on Saturday, February 28th. The event will be held at Kuhlken Field from 1:00 to 4 pm.

People are needed to help set-up, take down, serve the expected 500 participants and be great La Mesa Rotary ambassadors.

Please arrive at 1 PM to help set up the tents, tables, cut the tomatoes and lettuce.

Serving will be around 2:30 - 3 PM

See you there.

District 5340 CLLS

What is CLLS, you ask.

District Training Assembly (DTA) has a new name- **Club Leadership Learning Seminar (CLLS)**. The event will be held at Liberty Station on **March 28th at 8 am**. The focus is on training, engaging and empowering club leaders.

To participate in the District Grant and Global Grants we need two club members to participate.

More information to follow.

Epic Day of Service

The East County Rotary Clubs will be joining together for Rotary's Epic Day of Service, formerly known as Rotarians at Work. Epic Day of Service is a powerful worldwide movement that brings Rotary clubs, community partners, and volunteers together for one unified purpose – to serve others and create positive change in communities around the globe.

The East County Clubs will build, paint, and install Free Little Libraries to place in local neighborhoods.

Watch the Tattler for more information.

Mexican House Build



Mark Matthews is busy putting together our annual Mexican House Build project to take place on Friday, April 3, 2026. At this time, the Santee Lakeside Club will also be participating in the very worthwhile event.

Funding for the \$8000 project with Project Mercy is also needed. Mark is coordinating the following funding events:

March 11th - Bake Sale at Club Meeting

March 14th - Swap Meet

Clean your garages, take your items you want to donate to Mark or bring them to club meeting.

You can also donate to the La Mesa Rotary Foundation for the project using the following QR code.



February Rotarian of Month



Congratulations to Greg Erickson, February Rotarian of the Month. Greg is recognized for his "can do" support he demonstrates. Greg has volunteered his office space to store the items for our big projects, Backpacks and Fill-A-Bag. Greg has also taken on the challenge of serving as our Membership Chair. It's great to have you in the club.

Cura Coffee

Christine Passmore, last week's speaker from Cura Smiles told us how they sell Cura Coffee to support the free dental clinic. Please let Bill know if you want to purchase this ethically sourced coffee to support the clinic. The coffee, available in light. Medium or dark roast is \$17 a pound.

PELS



Just back from President-Elect Leadership Seminar (PELS), Gabriela gave us an update. The event was held at the LAX Marriott last weekend left Gabriela feeling somewhat overwhelmed with all the education she received last weekend.

Olayinka Hakeem Babalola, from the Rotary Club of Trans Amadi, Nigeria, will be Rotary International President for 2026-27. The theme for RY 2026-27 will be **Create A Lasting Impact.**

RYLA

We were happy to learn today that we have four students attending RYLA this year.

Thank you Bill!

Service Opportunities

Event	Date/Time	Location
Little League Opening Day	February 28, 2026	Kuhlken Field
Bake Sale-Mexican House Build	March 11, 2026	Club Meeting
Swap Meet - Mexican House Build	March 14 th	Spring Valley Swap Meet
District 5340 Intrumental Music Competition	March 15, 2026 1:30 - 4 PM	Coronado Library
Model UN	March 21 - 22, 2026	
Music Competition Next Level	March 23, 2026	Carlsbad Sea Retirement
Club Leadership Learning Seminar (CCLS) Formerly DTA	March 28, 2026	Liberty Station
Mexican House Build	April 3, 2026	
RYLA	April 10-12, 2026	Idyllwild
NAMI Walk	7 - 11 AM April 25, 2026	NTC Liberty Park
Multi-District Conference Register on line at rotary5340.org	April 24 - 26, 2026	Gaylord Pacific Resort & Convention Center 1000 H Street, Chula Vista
Camp Enterprise	April 23 - 25, 2026	
Epic Day of Service	May 16, 2026	TBD