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La Rueda

S E R V I C E A B O V E S E L F
THE ROTARY CLUB OF MONTEREY, RI DISTRICT 5230



John Narigi

President and General Manager, Laguna Seca Recreation Area
Update On Laguna Seca Regional Recreation Area/
Weathertech Raceway

A & D Narigi Consulting LLC was selected by the Monterey County Board of Supervisors and awarded the Management Contract of Laguna Seca Recreation Area in November 2019. As President and General Manager, John has taken strategic steps to turn Laguna Seca Recreation Area into a profitable asset for the County of Monterey, focusing on the entire 588 acre asset, which includes WeatherTech Raceway and the Recreation Area.

His previous position as Vice President and General Manager of the Monterey Plaza Hotel & Spa since October of 1993, John Narigi has drawn on over 37 years in the hospitality industry to develop and expand the hotel's luxury profile and reputation.

A native of Gig Harbor, Washington, Mr. Narigi is a graduate of Gonzaga University in Spokane, Washington. After career opportunities in Portland, Oregon and the San Francisco Bay Area he returned to the Pacific Northwest. In 1989, he opened the luxurious Mobil Four-Star Woodmark Hotel at Carrillon Point in Kirkland, Washington, where he remained until moving to the Monterey Peninsula.

Since relocating to the Monterey Peninsula, Mr. Narigi has served on numerous boards, both civic and hospitality related. Mr. Narigi first served on the Monterey Peninsula Chamber of Commerce and Visitors Bureau board of directors. He became the first president of the Monterey Peninsula Convention and Visitors Bureau after initiating and working with the board to separate the Visitors Bureau from the Chamber. He served as a board member of the Monterey Commercial Property Owners Association and the Cannery Row Business Association. Since 1996, he has been active as a board member and past president of the Monterey County Hospitality Association. He also has served as a board member for United Way

Monterey County and the Monterey County Convention & Visitors Bureau, intimately involved with the creation of the TID funding mechanism to expand the Bureau's budget, as well as serving on the committee to establish an industry funding source for the renovation of the Monterey Conference Center.

He also served on the board of the Monterey County Business Political Action Committee and Monterey Bay Issues and Candidates Political Action Committee.

Mr. Narigi served as chair of the Coalition of Peninsula Businesses since its creation in 2010, a business coalition with members representing chambers, trade associations, property owners, residents and private businesses. Its focus, to secure a long-term water solution at a reasonable cost for the Peninsula, working with local and state agencies as a true representative of our community. He gave up the chair position in 2019.

In 2010, he joined the board of Rancho Cielo, inspired by its mission and the vision of Retired Judge John Phillips, to work with "at-risk youth" throughout Monterey County. He served as board chair for two years.

Mr. Narigi also has numerous awards and accolades including: Monterey County Hospitality Association's "Hospitality Professional of the Year" (2001), California Hotel & Lodging Association's "Outstanding General Manager of the Year" (2006), the 2011 Monterey Business Hall of Fame by Junior Achievement of Northern California, and Citizen of the Year for the Monterey Peninsula Chamber of Commerce in 2017.

If asked what he has truly enjoyed over the years were his days of past, coaching his two sons, Anthony and Dominick, in their various sporting endeavors and co-chairing high school renovation projects such as Palma High School's baseball field and Monterey High's football field and track renovation. Working with and coaching youth and young adults was always an enjoyable break from the daily routine of a hotelier. Family time has always created special memories.

Mr. Narigi, his wife Roxane and Dominick, along with a group of special people have continued to give back to those who are less privileged with the creation of the Anthony Nicholas Narigi Scholarship Funds in memory of his son, Anthony, supporting youth and young adults through two funds. One being baseball, Anthony's beloved sport, and the other hospitality, the career path he had chosen.

Recreationally, Mr. Narigi enjoys his two dogs, Cope and Griffey, water sports, golf, racquetball, the "Zags" and the Seattle Seahawks. Proud father of his two sons, Anthony and Dominick, he and his wife of 35 years, Roxane, live in Corral de Tierra.



Hi, Chris Gatward here. I'm the guy no-one can understand at Rotary, but is the only one actually speaking ENGLISH. I was born in the South Island in the small west coast town of Hokitika, New Zealand where my Dad taught in a tiny country school, while my Mum raised my sister and me in a home so cold I was told the water froze in the toilet at night. We soon moved north where it was bit warmer and in a few years, there were five kids. Being teachers, my parents dragged the family around the country every few years as

promotions became available. Although we hated that at the time, we did see a lot of the country. Plus, holidays were spent on road trips camping in our caravan. Like most Kiwi boys I played Saturday morning rugby from the age of 5, with bare feet, and often in the frost. I played all the way through university, (we had graduated to wearing boots by then), and even a little when I came to the States. I am still an avid fan and watch the All Blacks play whenever I can.

I studied zoology at Massey University when I met a girl who was a bit of a traveler and she bet me I would not be game to travel with her overseas on a student exchange work visa program. So, in 1983 on a \$20 bet I borrowed money from my parents for a plane ticket and flew Pan Am to California. We ended up at Kirkwood and I found a place to live in a group of apartments behind the Cutthroat Saloon in Markleeville. Several of the people there were ski bums working at Kirkwood, and we carpoled in an old Chevy Nova with no chains. This is where I met my future wife, Vicki, and my days playing barefoot in the frost paid off. I was told our friends would know where I was because there were barefoot tracks in the snow from my place to Vicki's... We had terrible jobs (I worked shoveling snow, ski rentals,

sou chef, and best of all, flipping burgers at a warming hut on the back of the mountain), but it was real adventure. I became pretty good at skiing with my arms full of bags of drinks and hot dog buns. I even entered the 1984 Camel Speed Skiing competition when it came to Kirkwood.

Well, the visa expired, and I went back to New Zealand. However, living with my parents and working in a pet shop soon got old. I saved everything I earned, somehow was approved for a credit card, and was back in California knocking on Vicki's door in Alameda with a backpack and not much else. I went door to door at local businesses looking for work, and after laying bricks for a few weeks got a job working in a warehouse. Glad my degree was paying off! However, it all worked out, Vicki and I were married in 1985, lived in Alameda for a bit and bought our first house in Castro Valley. I loved to scuba dive, and often came to the Monterey area for fun, so in 1995 when I got the chance to move to my playground for work I couldn't believe my luck. At the time we had our first child, Kyle, and Sean was a few months away.

We bought our house in Pacific Grove the following year and have been here ever since. The boys went through PG schools, we dabbled in scouting, I dabbled in diving and golf, and then I spent many Wednesday nights and weekends sailing on a few different racing boats. Our crowning achievement was winning our class

in the 2017 Rolex Big Boat Series in San Francisco. I still race competitively and last year we travelled to Lago de Garda in Italy (at the invitation of the Prince of Bavaria) to race in the European Championships.

After a falling out with my previous employer I started my own business in 2005, M3 Environmental and now Vicki and I are co-owners, providing environmental consulting services to the Central coast area. I joined The Rotary Club of Monterey in 2012 have a great time getting to know another new group of fabulous people. Cheers!





December 15 COG HOLIDAY SOCIAL
via ZOOM @5:30pm. Come one, come all
to this very festive and fun Holiday Party!



DECEMBER – JANUARY

Tuesday – 12/15 COG Holiday Social

Thursday – 12/17 Rev. Ken Feske – Christmas Music and Homily

Thursday – 12/25 No Meeting – Christmas Holiday

Thursday – 12/31 No Meeting – New Years Holiday

Thursday – 01/07 TBD

**Thursday – 01/14 Dr. Mara Orscanin – Oceanography: Why Our Beaches
Come and Go**

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Yutaka Uyeda, S.E.
principal

2600 Garden Rd., Suite 305
Monterey, CA 93940

tel: 831-373-3181 cell: 831-241-8438
e-mail: uyaase@gmail.com - yutaka@uyeda-se.com



Terry L. Wecker
Realtor®/Manager

457 Webster Street
Monterey, CA 93940
831-649-0102
tweck@pacbell.net

BRE #00548546

customhoureality.com



Robert Russell
robertr@tpohr.com
831.647.7292

60 Garden Court, Suite 100 • Monterey, CA 93940
www.tpohr.com • Fax 831.658.0201
PI-25638



Daniel R. Baldwin
President/CEO

2354 Garden Road, Monterey, CA 93940
831.375.9712 x115 | Direct 831.884.5715
Cell 831.236.9815 | Fax 831.375.4731
danb@cfmco.org

www.cfmco.org
www.facebook.com/cfmco

Support The Martin/Hurd Rotary Club of Monterey Fund

at the CFMC that provides grants to local non-profit organizations supporting youth and scholarships for students.

For More Information:
<http://www.cfmco.org/about-us/fund-list/rotary-club-monterey-martinhurd-fund/>



FRANK & JONATHAN GEISLER A Geiger Affiliate
frank@geisler3.com
jonathan@geisler3.com
445 Reservation Road, Suite F
Marina, CA 93933
GEISLER3.com
Office: 831.372.6789
Fax: 831.372.6788
307 Main Street, Suite 210
Salinas, CA 93901

JANE S. IPSSEN



A Life Plan Retirement Community

President, CEO
831-626-4707
jipsen@cvmanor.com
cvmanor.com

8545 Carmel Valley Road
Carmel, California 93923



CARMEL REALTY COMPANY
ESTABLISHED 1913

Susan Freeland
Broker Associate

Dolores Street South of Seventh
P.O. Drawer C, Carmel-by-the-Sea, California 93921
Cell: 831.594.2327 Fax: 831.642.9626 Home: 831.642.9651
susan@carmel-realty.com www.montereypeninsulaproperty.com
www.carmel-realty.com DRE# 01318403



CLAY LARSON
DIRECTOR OF CLIENT RELATIONS
DIRECT LINE: (831) 264-4077
clay.larson@1stcapitalbank.com

KENNEDY, ARCHER & GIFFEN
A Professional Corporation

JON R. GIFFEN
Attorney at Law

24591 Silver Cloud Court
Suite 200
Monterey, California 93940

Tel (831) 373-7500
Fax (831) 373-7555
E-mail: jgiffen@kaglaw.net



CHAD CORRIEVAU, DDS, INC.
COMPREHENSIVE DENTISTRY

831.373.3068
DRCORRIEVAU@MPDG.COM
333 EL DORADO STREET
MONTEREY, CA 93940
MPDG.COM

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