

Rotary

Club of Oakland



We Care Corner

The We Care Committee reaches out to members when help is needed for a variety of reasons.

Areas of expertise include:

Home care information
including equipment & supplies
Post surgery help
Logging on to Zoom
A ride to the weekly Club meeting
Choosing a committee
Some cheer during a rough time

Send a confidential email to the We Care Committee address
RCOWeCareCommittee@gmail.com

We will reach out with sensitivity and be sure we offer appropriate support.

Rotary is here for you. Let's stay close and connect!

Club Meetings

September 25
Julie Berge

October 2
Alexis Madrigal

October 9
Ursula Jones Dickson

October 16
Bill Sokol

October 23
Tami Mucahy

LIVE OAK for September 18, 2025

STORIES

Next Club Meeting – September 25, 2025 – Julie Berge

President Elect Merlin Edwards announced our next speaker is Julie Berge, VP of the Wine Institute. She will address challenges facing the



wine industry.
The meeting will be in-person as well as on Zoom.

For those joining on Zoom, use this link [Thursday Club Meeting](#)

Rotary Meeting Highlights for September 18, 2025

Call to Order

President Joe Goralka, aka “Coach Joe”, called to order the regular meeting of the Rotary Club of Oakland, the 3rd oldest Rotary Club in the world, at 12:30 pm. **President Joe** welcomed members and guests attending in person and online and reminded us that Oakland Rotary is

Service Projects

Oaktoberfest – Beer Booth

October 4 and 5

Contact Tom Limon for information

Tree Planting Project With City of Oakland

November 1

Prescott Market

Food Insecurity Volunteer Tray-line Meal Assembly

October 13 – 9:00 – 11:15 am

SOS Meals on Wheels

Second & Fourth Mondays

Contact Karen Friedman to participate.

St. Vincent DePaul Holiday Party

December 13

Special Events

Oakland Rotary Golf Club

October 8 at

Sequoyah Country Club

Limit of 24 players, all skill levels welcome

Contact Dudley Thompson for more information.

Oktoberfest Business Mixer

October 9 – 5 – 7:30 pm

Minuteman Press

Piedmont Montclair Rotary Pickleball Tournament

October 11

Oakland Hills Tennis Club

District 5170 Avenues Of Service

October 16

Columbo Club

Halloween Party

October 30

where members come together to take action locally and globally and



have fun together.

President Joe thanked **Past President Carla Betts** for the new table decorations.

Visiting Rotarians and Guests

Joining us from Madison, Wisconsin was Rotarian Mathias Castillo. His club has over 1,000 members – something for Oakland #3 to aspire to!

Several Rotarians introduced their guests including **Pat Raburn, Isaac Kos-Read** (he introduced 3 guests!), **Faye Brandin, Jillian Loh**, and **Past President Ces Butner**.

Thought for the Day – Faye Brandlin

Faye Brandin provided a lighthearted quote from the world of Winnie the Pooh for today's thought. "What day is it, asked Pooh? It's today, squeaked Piglet. My favorite day, said Pooh!"

Meeting Sponsor – Maria Alderete

Maria Alderete, Executive Director and Co-founder of Community Kitchens and former owner of Luka's, sponsored today's meeting. The mission of Community Kitchens is to bring the community together and provide access to food for all. At Community Kitchens we believe in the transformative power of food. **Maria** invited Rotarians to their upcoming Gala Event, New Moon Night Market, on September 24th at the Oakland Museum Gardens. The celebration benefits the Community Kitchens' food justice programs in Oakland.

Chapel of the Chimes

Holiday Party

December 6

Home of Fred Morse

Rotary International Convention

June 13 – 17, 2026

Taipei, Taiwan

Register and pay in full by Dec 15, 2025 for discount.

Committee Meetings

Membership

Sept. 24 – 5 – 6 pm

Diversity, Equity and Inclusion

Sept. 29 – 5 – 6 pm

Community Service

Oct. 8 – 4 – 5 pm

Fun, Sport & Adventure

Oct. 8 – 6 – 7:15 pm

Birthday Greetings

Happy Birthday!

Celebrating are:

September

05 – Syd Saperstein

06 – Vera Hannush

07 – Nikki Lowy

08 – Dominique Enriquez

08 – Carey Clausen

10 – Nancy O'Malley

11 – Elle Fersan

13 – Gabe Bruck

17 – Janice Brickley

17 – Susan Smith

19 – Leslie Hilger

20 – Fred Morse

21 – Greg Gilbert

22 – Pat McMillan

22 – Trisha Connors

32 – Adam Tobin

24 – Erich Harris



New Members – Ryan Bates and Aaron Smith

Coach Joe invited **Keith Uriarte** to the podium to introduce two new members.

Ryan Bates graduated from Fremont High School and is the founder of State Signs LLC. He started his career in the signage industry in 1996. Today he has major contracts with industry giants such as Clear Channel and OutFront Media. He has a passion for the 1965 and 66 Ford Mustangs. He is honored to be a member of the 100 Black Men of the Bay Area, giving back to the City that helped raise him.

Aaron Smith attended Reed College in Portland, Oregon, majoring in the classics (Ancient Greece and Rome). While in Oregon, he worked and managed campaigns and communications for the state's largest LGBTQ non-profit. A California native, he now works in the tech sector for Cerby, an identity automation company for disconnected apps. Aaron enjoys running, biking, reading, classical music, and brown shingle home architecture. He is a distant relative of Beyonce and was voted best in his class at reciting ancient Greek poetry, in ancient Greek.

President Joe welcomed the new members and presented each with their Rotary pins, rosters, 4-way test and other Rotary goodies and told them they should never hesitate to say "hey coach put me in!"



24 – Will Hobbs Jr
25 – Sam Davis
27 – Ricka White
29 – Jesse Schmidt

Membership Anniversaries

Thank you for your years
of service to Rotary Club
of Oakland and the
community!

September

Wayne Goodroe – 41 years
Shanna O'Hare – 31 years
Johanna Leonard – 27 years
Rosemary Darden – 23 years
Ginni Ring – 19 years
Keri Butkevich – 10 years
Alex Kaffka – 9 years
Ed Brail – 4 years
Adam Tobin – 4 years
Nema Link – 3 years
Erich Harris – 2 years



President Joe then asked **Keith Uriarte** to come back to the microphone. **President Joe** mentioned that **Keith** has sponsored an amazing number of new members and asked what his secret sauce is to which **Keith** replied, "You just have to ask!" **President Joe** then presented **Keith** with a Rotary on the Run medal.



Children's Fairyland Event Recap and Thank You

President Joe gave a brief overview of last week's special meeting at Fairyland in honor of Fairyland's 75th Anniversary. **Kymberly Miller**, who in her day job is the head Fairy at Fairyland (CEO) was unable to attend the meeting, so **Ruth Stroup** joined **President Joe** on stage to receive congratulations for her outstanding catering. **President Joe** presented **Ruth** with a Rotary on the Run medal for her service to Oakland Rotary.



Announcements

Business Development Mixer

David Kersten took the microphone to announce the upcoming Business Development Committee's Oktoberfest mixer on October 9th at Minuteman Press and encouraged all Rotarians to attend.

District 5170 Avenues of Service

As directed by Don Corleone, **Elida Scola** invited Rotarians to attend the District 5170 Avenues of Service on Thursday, October 16th at the historic Colombo Club. Learn about community service projects and humanitarian activities, enjoy cocktails, and a delicious Italian Dinner and hear from a mystery speaker (hint-think SF 49ers). Check the club website for more information and registration.

Golf Tournament

Next up **Past President Dudley Thompson** shared with members that when he first joined Rotary it was because he wanted to play golf. Only later did he realize the amazing impact of Rotary projects and opportunities for networking. So, true to **Dudley's** original goal of playing golf, he invited Rotarians to join him on October 8th at Sequoia Country Club for an afternoon of golf. The event begins at noon. The cost is \$130 for those that are not members of Sequoia. Proceeds from the event will support Polio Plus. Register on Eventbrite.

Rotary Pickleball Tournament

Additionally, **Dudley** announced the Rotary Pickleball Tournament to end polio hosted by the Piedmont-Montclair Rotary Club scheduled for October 11th at the Oakland Hills Tennis Club. All levels are welcome. A special pre-tournament clinic is scheduled for beginners. Again, the proceeds will support Polio Plus and registration is through Eventbrite.

Other Events

President Joe announced that **Linda Hamilton's** group will be playing at Corner Pocket this Friday. The District Governor's visit to the Club is

October 16, and the Club's Halloween party is October 30 at Chapel of the Chimes.

Speakers for the Day — Robert Raburn and Victor Flores

President-elect Merlin Edwards introduced our speakers for today: **Victor Flores and Robert Raburn**, two of the nine elected BART directors. **Victor Flores** was elected to a four-year term of office in November 2024 representing District 7. **Robert Raburn** was reelected in November 2022 and has served as a BART director for 20 years representing District 4.

BART leadership is working very hard to “keep the lights on”. BART connects the Bay Area to Oakland. Oakland has eight stations, more than any other city. The average workday usage shows 15,000 riders exit stations in downtown Oakland. The new BART headquarters is coming to downtown Oakland. BART partners with local civic and nonprofit organizations.

BART is a very large, complex system that is in the process of modernizing. There are currently 50 million riders annually. The system has 50 stations in 5 counties with 131 miles of tracks and 1,000 train cars. Modernization includes station and accessibility improvements, communication-based train control, service enhancements, clean trains and restrooms and reducing crime. This is resulting in the highest rider satisfaction in ten years.

Next generation fare gates have been installed system wide which has improved accessibility, safety and reduced fare avoidance. 32% fewer riders report fare evasion on their trips. At the same time BART is committed to ensuring all riders can access transit including discounts for youth and seniors.

The greatest concern is that the current BART fare model is not sustainable. Pre-pandemic BART was able to cover two-thirds of their expenses. However, reduced ridership and changes to work habits require change to the business model. While effectively managing costs at below inflation levels the revenue received is not recovering to pre-pandemic levels. BART cuts would cause severe regional consequences. The bottom line is that more riders equals more revenue. Senate Bill 63 the “Connect Bay Area Act” is a regional measure to implement a 14-year tax to support regional transit. The Governor has until October 12th to sign the bill so that it can go forward.

Robert and Victor then took questions from the audience.

- While seeing some improvements in fare evasions I've still witnessed evaders. What can be done to further reduce?
 - Alert station agents. Police will issue citations.
- Why do we pay by distance rather than by entrance?
 - The scope of the system requires that riders pay their “fair

share”.

- How is the ballot measure polling? What percentage is required for passage?
 - Currently it would require a 2/3 majority. However, there is a signature gathering effort occurring. If that is successful it would reduce the percentage of passing to 50%. There is no current polling.
- Will the measure raise enough money to reduce the current projected deficit?
 - No, but it will help move the needle. We need to get more people in seats.
- When I travel to other areas, nationally and internationally, the trains seems to come more often. Is there a reason why BART trains do not come more regularly?
 - New communication track system will allow for running trains closer together. More riders equals better service.



President Joe thanked our speakers and shared that a contribution to Polio Plus has been made in their honor.

Bellringers

Joe Goralka rang the bell in memory of his sister-in-law's mother who recently passed away.

Adjourn

Pres. Joe thanked those that helped put on today's meeting and invited new members with their sponsors to go to the back of the room. The meeting was adjourned at 1:30 pm.