

# Rotary

## Club of Indio



Avi joined the Rotary Club of Indio during the pandemic to give back to her community and has loved supporting local students through college scholarships ever since.

She works at Cal State San Bernardino's Palm Desert Campus, where she helps create engaging programs and experiences for local students.

Outside of work and service, she enjoys traveling with her daughter, Lyla, and practicing outdoor yoga with her nieces.



**AVI RODRIGUEZ, ED.D.**

*MEMBER SINCE 2021*

# Rotary Club of Indio



Bob grew up in Chicago and earned his bachelor's degree and MBA from the University of Denver. He moved to Los Angeles in 1970 to join Security Pacific Bank, where he became the bank's first municipal bond salesman. He later opened a bond department for the Bank of Palm Springs and went on to become a partner at Stone & Youngberg, a firm known for pioneering California municipal bonds. He later moved to Wells Fargo with his son, who continues the business today. Bob retired in 2010.

In Rotary, Bob was a member of the Rotary Club of Los Angeles (LA5) from 2000 to 2006, where he participated in humanitarian projects in El Salvador, Vietnam, and Colombia. He joined the Indio Rotary Club in 2016.

**ROBERT FIRRING**

*MEMBER SINCE 2016*



# Rotary Club of Indio



Dennis Sheehan is a retired industry professional who concluded his career with Abbott Vascular, where he contributed to advancements in healthcare and medical technology. He holds a Bachelor of Science in Biology from St. Bonaventure University and an MBA from the University of Notre Dame, combining scientific knowledge with strong business acumen.

Dennis built a career in international business with Corning Glass, working across Latin America and the Asia Pacific region, and resided in Singapore while running Corning's operations there. He also lived in the United Kingdom, managing worldwide sales for Biocompatibles UK's medical device division prior to its acquisition by Abbott Vascular.

Based in Indio, California, Dennis is married and a proud father of two adult children. He is also the delighted grandfather of five grandchildren, who bring energy, perspective, and plenty of joy to his life.



**DENNIS SHEEHAN**

*MEMBER SINCE 2016*

# Rotary Club of Indio



Mark was born and raised in Whittier, CA. A graduate of the University of California, Santa Barbara, Whittier College, and the University of Nevada, Reno, he is retired from a 36-year career in CA community college administration, having worked mostly as a chief financial officer but also as president at four colleges.

A great lover of the out-of-doors, Mark enjoys hiking, boating, and travel. With five marathons under his belt, he is now a former runner. Mark has had a home in the desert since 2007 and is now a resident of Sun City Shadow Hills in Indio.

Mark has served as Youth Services Chair for two years and will be president of the Rotary Club of Indio for the 2026-27 year.



**MARK J. ZACOVIC, PH.D.**

*MEMBER SINCE 2011*

# Rotary

## Club of Indio



After spending her early years in the high desert, steeped in a 1950s-era upbringing, she relocated to the Pacific Northwest, where she was raised on Mercer Island and later graduated from the University of Washington. Her journey then brought her back to California to attend the University of San Diego School of Law, setting the foundation for a distinguished legal career.

She went on to serve the County of Riverside with dedication and distinction, ultimately retiring as Chief Assistant District Attorney. Never one to slow down, she played a pivotal role in establishing the California Desert Trial Academy College of Law, where she continues to shape future legal minds as Dean of Students and Professor of Criminal Law.

A committed community leader, she has been an active member of Indio Rotary for over 30 years and has proudly served two terms as President.



**SUE STEDING**

*MEMBER SINCE 1993*

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Jose A. Ramirez was born and raised in Indio and serves as a Principal Management Analyst in the City Manager's Office for the City of Indio, where he works on special projects, community programs, and citywide initiatives. He earned his bachelor's degree in accounting and his MBA from California State University, San Bernardino. Passionate about local government, Jose takes pride in helping move meaningful projects forward that benefit residents and strengthen the community.

Jose has been actively involved in efforts that promote civic engagement, beautification, and community improvement in Indio. He enjoys being part of work that brings people together and creates a lasting positive impact.

As a member of Rotary, Jose values the club's spirit of service, leadership, and fellowship and is proud to be part of an organization dedicated to doing good in the community.



**JOSE A. RAMIREZ**

*MEMBER SINCE 2025*



# Rotary

## Club of Indio



Jennifer was born in San Antonio, Texas and grew up an “Air Force Brat.” She moved to SoCal in 1979 and grew up in Redlands before moving to the Coachella Valley in 1995. While in Redlands, Jenn was heavily involved with the Redlands YMCA and an active participant in the Great ‘Y’ Circus until her early 20’s when she started her family.

In 2008, Jenn started her first business, Classic Cleaning, which she owned and operated until 2019. She currently owns and operates CJS Power, Lighting & Design and No Shorts Electrical Services with her husband and fellow Rotarian, Chris. Jenn joined the Rotary Club of Indio in 2019 and served as Club Treasurer from 2020 to 2026.

She loves serving the community with Rotary and Wellspring Church through events like the Tour de Palm Springs, Math Field Day and others.



**JENNIFER SCHULTZ**

*MEMBER SINCE 2019*

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Dave Derry is a proud snowbird, splitting his time between Sun City Shadow Hills in Indio and Halibut Cove, Alaska. Born and raised in Alaska back when it was still a Territory, he grew up in the kind of cold most people only hear about, then worked his way from a junior high job burning trash at the National Bank of Alaska into a 15-year banking career. When asked to relocate, he decided it was time for a change and, with his wife, built a real estate appraisal business that lasted more than 45 years.

Now a few years into retirement, he's fully on board with the idea that escaping Alaska winters is a pretty great plan. Summers are spent at the cabin he built in Halibut Cove, reached by a 45-minute boat ride, with all the comforts of home and a little extra adventure. Winters in the Coachella Valley mean hiking, pickleball, good friends, and Rotary. A longtime Rotarian and four-time past president, he enjoys pitching in, staying involved, and sharing in the camaraderie and service that come with it

**DAVE DERRY**

*MEMBER SINCE 2026*



# Rotary

## Club of Indio



Howard Hoffenberg was introduced early to business as the son of a small business owner. Trained as a biochemist and chemist, he conducted pioneering research in what is now known as epigenetics at the University of Illinois Medical School.

He later worked as an engineer before spending most of his career as a business and intellectual property attorney, representing startups, small businesses, and some public companies.

He is married and enjoys traveling, golfing, and skiing.

# HOWARD HOFFENBERG

*MEMBER SINCE 2024*



# Rotary

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Born and raised in Redding, California, she is married to Mike McNamara and part of a blended family that includes five children and three grandchildren.

She enjoys hiking, kayaking, traveling, and spending time with friends and family. Her favorite pastimes include knitting, sewing, weaving, fused glass, and stained glass work.

She currently resides in Redding, California, and spends her winters in Indio.

**CARLA MCNAMARA**

*MEMBER SINCE 2021*



# Rotary

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Chris Pickering, a Cerritos native, holds degrees from USC and USF. He served in the U.S. Army, graduating from the JFK Special Warfare Center and leading teams in the U.S., South Korea, and Qatar. He is a member of VFW Post 3699.

After his service, he became Communications Director for the Western Fairs Association and later CEO of the Northwest Washington Fair Association. As a Zone 8 representative on the IAFE Board, he helped secure \$108 million in federal funding for fairs through the Shuttered Venue Operators Grant.

Chris now leads Pickering Events, operates the Riverside County Fairgrounds, produces the Riverside County Fair & National Date Festival, and supports fairs across California. He lives in Indio with his wife and two children.

**CHRIS PICKERING**

*MEMBER SINCE 2022*

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Don grew up in downstate IL and earned a Bachelor Degree from Bradley University in Business Management. After ten years in the arena management field, Don entered the fast growing casino industry focused on marketing. Five casinos and four states later, Don arrived in SoCal in 2007 and has been Vice President of Marketing for Fantasy Springs Resort Casino ever since. In the desert, through the casino, Don met his bride-to-be, Veronica, and they have been a team since 2010.

Don joined the Rotary Club of Indio in 2014. He was President of the Club in 2017-18 and won District Award as President of the Year. He served numerous District positions and chaired the District Conference in 2018-19 and the District Foundation Gala in 2019-20. He was nominated by the Club and served as Governor of District 5330 in 2022-23. Beyond our Club and District, Don has sat on the SWPELS Board since 2023 and was SWPELS Chair for 2026.



## **DON CASPER**

*MEMBER SINCE 2014*

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Merlina Tate was born and raised in Seattle, Washington, and graduated from the University of Washington in Physical Therapy. She married Jim Tate in 1960, and together they farmed dry land wheat near Almira, Washington for 46 years. After his passing in 2006, she continued spending winters at their home in Sun City Shadow Hills.

She has three daughters, four grandchildren, and four great-grandchildren. An active member of her community, she has been involved in clubs and sports, including leadership roles in local golf organizations.

She joined Rotary in 2021 and has served as webmaster for [indiorotary.org](http://indiorotary.org) for the past four years, where she enjoys contributing to club projects.



**MERLINA TATE**

*MEMBER SINCE 2021*

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Bryan has served over 33 years in local government and has been Indio's City Manager since May of 2021. Prior to his service in Indio, Bryan served as the City of Manager of Oakley, CA where is served for nearly 16 years. Previously, he served as City Manager of Mesquite, NV and Rupert, ID.

He also served as the Assistant City Manager in Alamogordo, NM and as a Management Aide in Provo, UT. He recently announced his retirement to take place this summer.

Later this year, he and his wife will begin serving as missionaries for The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints in Latin America.



**BRYAN MONTGOMERY**

*MEMBER SINCE 2021*

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Philip is from Whittier, earning his BS in Mechanical Engineering at Cal Poly SLO. His electric power career started at Bechtel in San Francisco in 1980: 6 years - San Francisco (met Janet); 2 years - Princeton, NJ (married Janet); 4 years - Nucla, CO; 14 years - Kennerdell, PA; 10 years - Charlotte, NC (charter member & 4th president of the Charlotte International Rotary Club); 2 years - Alamosa, CO; 4 years - Mecca, CA; retired in Fall, 2023 to Indio, CA.

Philip and Janet have four daughters (28 to 40). Two were Rotary Exchange Students in Argentina and Chile, two attended RYLA - still wildly enthusiastic about it! Philip joined Rotary because of his interest in meeting people from other cultures and in leaving the world better than he found it. Favorite Rotary experience? Climbing Mt Kilimanjaro in 2012 with 30 NC District 7680 Rotarians, raising awareness and \$125,000 for polio eradication.

**PHILIP JONES**

*MEMBER SINCE 2025*



# Rotary

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Stacy was born and raised in Orange County and spent her early years in Buena Park near Knott's Berry Farm. Her family moved to the desert in 1991, living in La Quinta before settling in Indio. She experienced significant family losses early in life, including her mother and grandparents.

She met her husband in 2000, and they married on May 19, 2001. They will celebrate 25 years of marriage this May.

Stacy joined Rotary in 2009 and has served in several leadership roles, including club treasurer, president, and foundation chair. She has also served twice as an Assistant Governor and will step into the role of Executive Assistant Governor in July 2026.

In her free time, she enjoys reading, traveling, and attending baseball games.



**STACY FIFIELD**

*MEMBER SINCE 2009*

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Benjamin “Ben” is a lifelong Indio resident and dedicated public servant with more than 40 years of community service. He began his career with the Indio Police Department in 1984 and retired in 2024 as Police Administrative Officer. In 2018, he was appointed to the Coachella Valley Mosquito & Vector Control District Board of Trustees as Indio’s representative, and in 2024 he was elected to the Indio City Council.

Ben’s family has lived in the Coachella Valley since 1919, contributing to its agricultural heritage for over 70 years. He is a founding board member of Coachella Valley Volunteers in Medicine and remains active in the Rotary Club of Indio, the Coachella Valley History Museum, and the Desert Recreation Foundation. He has also supported youth programs through the Coachella Valley Community Trust and the Boy Scouts of America for nearly 50 years.



**BENJAMIN GUITRON**

*MEMBER SINCE 2004*