



Rotary Club of La Quinta

Service above self since 1985



The “THANKSGIVING” Meeting



On November 9, 2023, at 6 PM, La Quinta Rotarians, along with their spouses, guests, visitors, and friends gathered together at the PGA West GREG NORMAN Clubhouse and enjoyed an evening filled with awards, giving and good fun.



Bruce and Lora Cathcart at the Greeting table.

Everyone was in good spirits and looking forward to celebrating the start of the “GIVING” Season on this cool November evening.



Upon arrival we were delightfully surprised to find the room set with two tables of 8 and one table of 4 decked out in fine linens and each with plates of appetizers that included deviled eggs and toast points with sweet potato puree and Ube yam toppings. Absent was the usual buffet table and the room lighting had been dimmed to create a more intimate and elegant environment. The stage was set for something special, although we had no idea what was in store for us on this evening!



After about 30 minutes of socializing and availing themselves of the libations available at the bar, those in attendance stood as President Bruce Cathcart called the meeting to order and had Dan Fissori lead us in the salute to our flag.



President Bruce gave the invocation expressing special thanks for all of the blessings that have been bestowed upon us and for the attendance of our two Captains, Mike Bianco and Andy Martinez from the Riverside County Sheriff's Department, who both exemplify the Rotary Spirit through their Service above Self on a daily basis; and also for our La Quinta High School Interact Club Faculty Advisor, Frank Ceja who goes above and beyond every day in service to the youth in our community. He welcomed back fellow Rotarian Kimberly McKinney whose work with the Coachella Valley Rescue Mission is an inspiration to us all!



RSO Cpt.s Andy Martinez & Mike Bianco

Frank Ceja & LQHS Interact Pres. Javier Gonzalez

Next Bruce welcomed everyone, and introductions were made. Starting first with our visiting Rotarians of which we had 2 this evening including Kimberly McKinney

and our Interact Club Faculty Advisor Frank Ceja from the Coachella Valley Rotary Club who then introduced our LQHS Interact Club President Javier Gonzalez. Dan Fissori introduced his lovely wife TC, and Doug Motz introduced his lovely wife Carole, President Bruce introduced “Friend of Rotary” Cat Makino and Captain Mike introduced Captain Andy. Lastly, Lora Cathcart introduced her son Jim Cathcart. Allan Levin, Linda Evans, Sandra Lauer, Doug Hassett, Dr. Bruce Underwood, and Robert Wilkinson rounded out tonight’s attendees. Thank you all who attended and for making this evening so special.

Following the new format, Dinner was then to be served with the announcements and meeting fun to follow... but first Araceli Mejorado, the Food and Beverage Manager for the Greg Norman Clubhouse addressed the members and guests this evening.



We have all come to know and love Araceli for her dynamic and caring personality and all that she does each month to make sure that our meetings are always perfect... so we were both happy for her and a bit sad for us when she announced that this evening was to be her last meeting as the Food and Beverage Manager for the Greg Norman Clubhouse. The good news was that she has been promoted and will now be the Food and Beverage Manager at the Citrus Clubhouse. In our opinion, this is a well-deserved promotion for such an outstanding individual and we want her to know that we offer her our support and best wishes for her continued success with the PGA West organization. Araceli then shared with us that she and her staff (including Issac, Lupita, and Chef Lulu) wanted to do something special for us this evening and so instead of a buffet, they had prepared an amazing Thanksgiving FEAST that was to be served “family style” at each table!



Just when we thought the food could not get any better... This evening's meal really showcased Chef Lulu's talent. The appetizers were both excellent with the sweet potato puree on the toast points being the showcased star and really setting up the courses that followed. The mixed greens salad with grape tomatoes, sliced cucumbers and mozzarella cheese balls was topped with a creamy citrus dill dressing that was light and refreshing. And then came the good stuff... roasted mixed vegetables, creamy garlic potatoes and a gravy glazed turkey roll that was stuffed with cranberries, and traditional stuffing with celery, onions, and mushrooms. The vegetables and potatoes were perfectly prepared, well-seasoned and delicious, but the turkey "loaf" was truly amazing! Normally you have to spear a piece of turkey on your fork, scoop up some stuffing and dip it in the gravy to get the "perfect bite". But every bite of the tender and juicy gravy glazed turkey with the incredible stuffing mixture WAS the perfect bite!



For dessert we were treated to a slice of pumpkin pie with crème fresh and an Ube (yam) Flan. Both were outstanding with the non-traditional style flan being unique in flavor and texture as well as delicious! Our highest praise and compliments to Chef Lulu for creating and serving us a veritable triumph of the culinary arts!

About the time when everyone was just finishing up their desserts, president Bruce stepped back up to the microphone and took the opportunity to welcome everyone again and thank Carly, Felicity, Chef Lulu, and especially Araceli, Issac, and Lupita... who all received an overwhelming round of applause for their efforts this evening. I suspect that it would have been a “standing ovation” but my guess is that everyone was too full to stand!

Bruce then reminded us that our next dinner meeting would take place on **December 14, 2023**, at the GREG NORMAN Clubhouse starting at 6 PM where we will have a VERY SPECIAL GUEST! This meeting will double as our HOLIDAY PARTY and we are hoping to get a group photo on this evening (as well as other photo opportunities with our special guest). Please do your best to attend this one!!! More on this in upcoming flyers. **[Please save the date now so when you are asked “Are you doing anything on the evening of the 14th?” You can say, “YES! that’s my Rotary Club dinner meeting!!!”]**

Our next SERVING night at the Coachella Valley Rescue Mission will be next Thursday evening, November 16, 2023, from 4:15 to 5:30 PM. Bruce and Lora will be there and would love some company. If interested in helping out, contact President Bruce for more information on how you can participate (or just show up at 4:15 at the mission. **[Time conundrum here... just go with it!]**

Our next Lunch/Board meeting will be Friday, December 1, 2023, at Burgers and Beer La Quinta at 12:00 Noon. (Flyers to follow on this as well!).



La Quinta High School Interact Club

President Bruce re-introduced our LQHS Faculty Advisor Frank Ceja who along with our Interact Student Club President Javier Gonzalez gave us an update on the status of our Interact Club and their plans for the coming year. It is quite evident that the students are anxious and ready to get started on their first community service project! Any suggestions???

WORLD'S BEST GRANDPA



Tonight, we celebrated the World's Best Grandpa!!! **[If you have a special occasion coming up, please let me know so your Rotary Family can help celebrate it with you!!!]**

Wednesday, March 20, 2024

**Rotary Night at the Firebirds Hockey Game at the Acrisure Arena
Valleywide Rotary Clubs Pre-Game Mixer**



Bruce reminded everyone that at the recent Coachella Valley Rotary President's Council meeting he was informed that there is a Firebirds Hockey Game and Valleywide Rotary Club Mixer being scheduled for March 20, 2024, at the Acrisure Arena. Provided that 200 Rotarians sign up, an hour and a half before the gates open to the Hockey Game Rotarians from all the clubs in the valley will gather in a private room with one drink (each) and light hors d'oeuvres plus a few extra surprises! The cost is to be \$65 per ticket for Center Ice seats. The price does not include parking. They are still not yet accepting reservations or payment for tickets yet, but as soon as they do we'll get a sign-up sheet together.



DILLON, MONTANA

Moustachesicles



President Bruce then shared that Rotary is EVERYWHERE! He asked that whenever and wherever we travel, and we see examples of Rotary in service around the world, that we snap a few photos and send them to him so they can be shared with our members and guests. This month President Bruce and his wife Lora sent in a couple of photos from their recent trip to Montana. President Bruce noted that the picture on the right above was to illustrate what he imagined was the “ICE MELT” referenced in the Rotary sign on the left. (Yup, it was cold in Montana!) We look forward to seeing more photos like these in the coming months. Thank you for sharing!!!

ROTARY CLUB OF LA QUINTA

CVRM Partnership



OCTOBER “CANNED GOODS” DRIVE

242 Canned Goods Items
1 back pack, Men's T-shirts and underwear &
16 more pairs of socks!











Next, President Bruce first thanked all the members and guests for their participation in last month's CVRM “Canned Goods” drive where our club members and guests brought in 242 canned goods items (plus a few extras) to be used at the Coachella Valley Rescue Mission and distributed by their outreach program to the homeless from Banning to Blythe.

Our drive this month is to raise enough money to purchase Pumpkin Pies to be served as dessert with the CVRM Thanksgiving dinner. 30 of the giant pumpkin pies have been ordered from Costco which should make over 600 slices of pie for dessert. In their absence, the Turners, the Harts, the McGarreys, the Andersons and the Osbornes together pledged a total of \$385.00!!! (Those in attendance

added another \$270.00 which totals \$655.00) This total is over 3X the budget for the pies and so it was then Kimberly McKinney's turn who shared with us that they seldom receive donations of dinner rolls, butter, and whipped cream... so the extra funds will go to more pies and those items first; then, depending on if there is any leftover, we can purchase other needed items and/or perhaps save the money for next month's TOY drive. Kimberly then shared with us all about the Thanksgiving Feast that is prepared each year at the mission and how they serve and/or deliver over 2,000 meals in our community each Thanksgiving! Just think about that good feeling that we will all have when we are gathered with our family and friends and enjoying a delicious slice of pumpkin pie this Thanksgiving... knowing that thanks to our efforts, hundreds of folks at the mission will also be able to enjoy a slice of pumpkin pie for dessert! Kimberly then shared with the group that next month's drive at the mission will be our annual "TOY DRIVE" and we are being asked to donate new toys for kids of all ages. It's a great opportunity to help the less fortunate children here in the desert to know that someone cares about them and to help them to have a happy holiday season.

ROTARY CLUB OF LA QUINTA

Rotarian of the Month

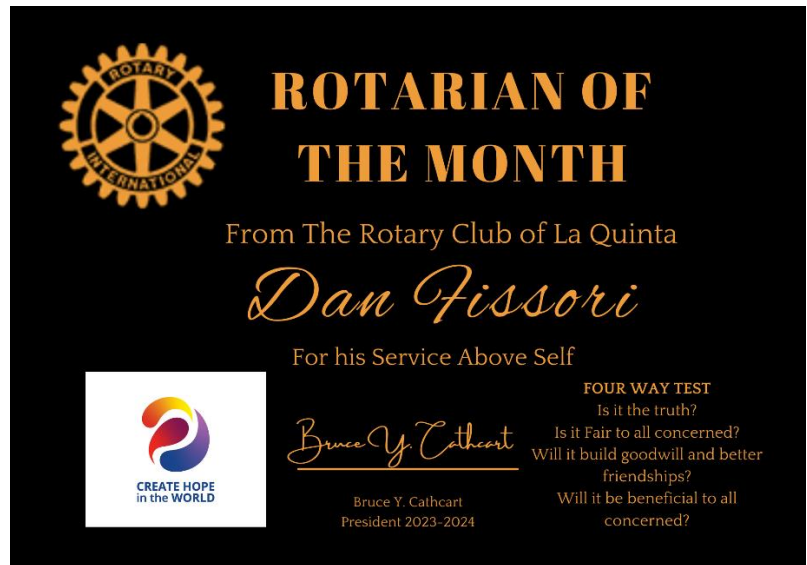
November Rotarian of the Month: Dan Fissori



Thank you for your Service Above Self!



It was then time for President Bruce to name this month's Rotarian of the Month. Each ROM receives a special pin, certificate, and 100 Paul Harris Points.



President Bruce began, "This month's Rotarian of the month has been a member of our club for over 16 years and has been our President two times serving in 2010-2011 and 2022-2023 making him our immediate Past President. He is currently on the Club Board where he serves as our club's Youth Services Committee Chairman, and he is the current President of our Foundation Board. He has been a mentor/counselor at both PRYDE and RYLA and it is due to his efforts and those of our Faculty Advisor Frank Ceja that the Interact Club at La Quinta High School has been re-established. He is a contributor in every way to our club, serving the evening meal at the rescue mission, donating both his time and his happy dollars, and has only missed 1 meeting in the last two years! Our Congratulations to Dan Fissori, our Rotarian of the Month for November!"

Finally, Bruce asked, "Who's ready to get this party started?"



This month's Dinner Sponsor Package is the "THANKSGIVING BASKET". It includes 2021 bottle of Daou Reserve Cabernet Sauvignon (95pts.) and a 2020 Central Coast Treana Blanc, a Natural Décor Turkey centerpiece, a Premium Bamboo Charcuterie Platter set with pull out drawers, 3 Thanksgiving Kitchen Towels and 2 Potholders, 1 bag Ltd. Edition Werther's Pumpkin Spice Soft Caramels, 1 Starbucks Pumpkin Spice ground coffee and Thanksgiving coffee mug, Trader Joe's Pumpkin Biscotti, Fall Leaf Tortilla Chips, Petite Pumpkin Spice Cookies, Garlic and Jalapeno stuffed Olives, 10 packs of Best Savory Charcuterie Snacks, 1 Hickory Farms Farmhouse Summer Sausage, 1 box of See's Candies Milk Caramel Apple Scotch Mallows and a Faux Wicker Basket!



After a single card (half) was drawn from the top hat, all the "Dinner Sponsor Card" holders were asked to stand up, they were once again painfully and ever so slowly asked to be seated for not holding the right color, suit, or number (or face card) until only one card holder remained standing... And our lucky winner this month was ISSAC! Congratulations Issac!!!

Next it was time for "Happy Dollars". Happy Dollars gives everyone in attendance the opportunity to make a voluntary donation to the club and announce to the group something that they are happy about, knowing that all donations go to further the Rotary causes. Our Sargent-at-arms Allan Levin carried the hat and

had Bruce start things off with a donation in honor our special guests in attendance this night as well as for surviving a successful trip to Montana! Next Lora and Jim Cathcart each donated a few dollars in celebration of Casey Zapcart, her military service, and the upcoming Veteran's Day. Several happy dollars followed celebrating Veteran's Day, the new interact club, congratulating and welcoming our new Chief of Police... and many other things... but I forgot to take notes! Including the Dinner sponsor tickets over \$300.00 was collected this evening which will be used to support the club's annual charitable giving. Our thanks to you all!

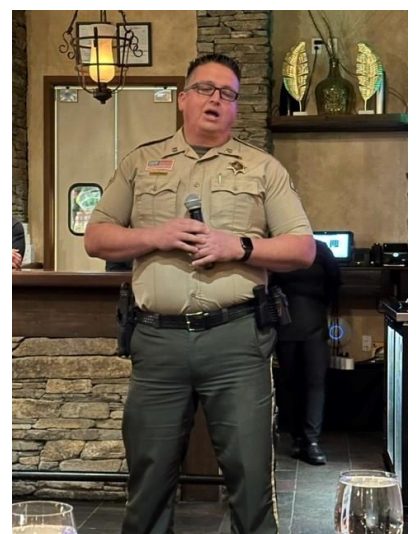
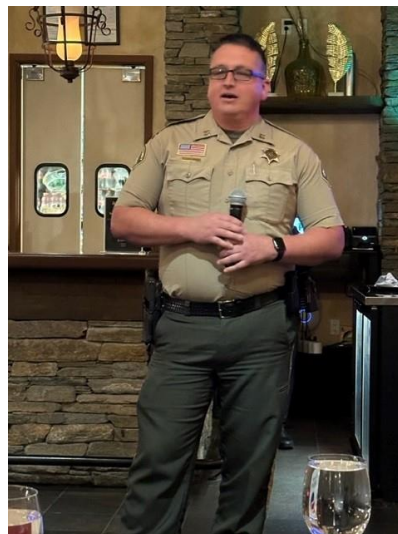
Guest Speakers: Cpt.s Mike Bianco/Andy Martinez November 9, 2023



President Bruce introduced our speakers this evening beginning, "We are so very fortunate to have with us two speakers tonight, both from the Riverside County Sheriff's Department, Captain Mike Bianco and Captain Andy Martinez. We have all come to know and respect Mike as a member of our club over the past 2 years and through the truly GREAT job that he has done as the City of La Quinta's Chief of Police and Captain of the Thermal Station. Having seen almost as many Captains come to our club in as many years as we have existed, we know that the Sheriff's department always sends us their "Brightest and Best" officers to La Quinta as a steppingstone on to bigger and greater things within the department. I actually warned Mike of this when we first met... and, well, the time has come for Mike to move on up! Tonight, Mike has graciously offered

to give us a quick retrospective of his time spent here in La Quinta and fill us all in on what's next for him before introducing us to the New City of La Quinta Chief of Police and Captain of the Thermal station... (and soon to be a new Rotarian and Member of our club!) Captain Andy Martinez. I would then ask that Andy take a few minutes to introduce himself and tell us a little about himself, his plans for La Quinta and also how our club can be of assistance to him and his department in the coming year... of course before he then moves on up... And finally, hopefully there will be enough time left for questions and answers. It is my honor and privilege to introduce Captain Mike Bianco and Captain Andy Martinez!"

Captain Mike, who has become a good friend to all of us and who has been an excellent Chief of Police for the past two years addressed the audience. He began by thanking everyone for their support and assured us all that he would remain a member of our club for as long as possible. He shared that he was very proud of his accomplishments here in the City of La Quinta [as well he should be] and of the citizens in our town. He informed us that he was not moving up so much as being reassigned to head up the Drug and Gang Task Force. [We all recognize this pattern as well as the next step in moving up the ladder!] He then took great pride in introducing his replacement Captain Andy Martinez to everyone and assured us that we were being left in good hands!



Captain Andy Martinez has been with the Riverside County Sheriff's Department for 20 years. He is a native of the Coachella Valley and has spent his entire career here in the Coachella Valley where he has worked his way up through the ranks. He was originally stationed at the Indio Station (now the Thermal Station) and has worked patrol operations, on the Coachella Community Action Team, the CV Violent Crimes Task Force, as Palm Desert's Administrative Sergeant and the Palm Desert Stations Investigations Bureau supervisor, and in La Quinta where his primary role was to oversee and manage law enforcement services, while finding opportunities to enhance the delivery of services and improve the quality of life for city residents and visitors, and reduce crime. On October 31, 2023, Andy was promoted to Captain and the obvious choice to take command of the Thermal Station, providing law enforcement services to the eastern Coachella Valley's unincorporated areas and the contract cities of La Quinta and Coachella.

Andy possesses a Bachelor of Science in Education and a Master of Accountancy degree and has been a life-long resident of the Coachella Valley with his wife of 13 years and 3 children.

Andy began by sharing his history in the Valley and the highlights (above) in his career. One of the most impressive things that he shared was that from the age of 13 he knew exactly what he wanted to do in life and that was to become a Sheriff's Deputy. He set a course to obtain that goal and followed through! He admitted that he is still getting used to being called "Captain" but feels ready to accept the challenge. He is looking forward to his new position (and responsibilities) and by the end of his presentation we were all confident that he will be an excellent Chief of Police for the City of La Quinta! Andy patiently (and expertly) answered questions from the audience before turning the mic back over to President Bruce. President Bruce assured both Captains that they could count on the continued support of the Rotary Club of La Quinta and that we were all looking forward to getting to know Andy (and his wife) better at future meetings.



President Bruce then called Captain Mike Bianco back to the podium where he shared with him with the club's most heartfelt thanks for the GREAT job that he did (and continues to do) for us all, and presented him with a Certificate of Appreciation for his "Service Above Self".

President Bruce led the group in the reciting of the "Four Way Test" before adjourning the meeting.

It was another wonderful evening spent with fellow Rotarians, spouses, guests, and both new and old friends in the spirit of Rotary.

As Rotarians, our main goal is Peace on Earth. Together, approximately 1.4 million Rotarians are working daily toward this goal by helping to improve the lives of those less fortunate in our own communities and around the world. For us, this year that includes our monthly contributions to the Coachella Valley Rescue Mission, our East Coachella Valley Clean Water project, Polio Plus, the Guatemala Literacy Program, Shelter Box and in so many other ways that we can all be proud of our association with the Rotary Club of La Quinta.

As a reminder, our club will be meeting the 2nd Thursday evening of every month. Our next meeting is on December 14, 2023, to be held at the GREG NORMAN Clubhouse. The meeting will start at 6 PM. Please make sure you confirm your reservation at Bruce@LQPRE.com no later than Monday 12/11/23. The club is responsible for all dinners canceled after that date. There will be a flyer or two

coming your way with more details. Make sure to save the date and let us know that you will be joining us... the fun is just getting started!!!

YIRS,

Bruce Cathcart

President 2023-2024

Feel free to contact me with any questions or comments. You can reach me at Bruce@LQPRE.com.

[Editor's note: Thank you all for your attendance and making our meetings a priority in your schedule. Please share this newsletter with your spouses and friends that could not attend this past meeting and let them know that THEY WERE MISSED!]