



No one is useless in this world who lightens the burdens of another.
~ Charles Dickens

Meeting Highlights

We welcomed a number of visitors to our meeting including: Laurie and Matty (friends of Eric and Lynn), Chris and Ingrid (friends of Rosie and Chris), Dmitry and Victoria (our guest speaker and his wife), Sharon and Nancy P, (both interested in joining our club), and Bruce and Tom, (two neighbors of Eric and Lynn). Our table was blessedly full!

We were reminded everyone to complete our club assessment surveys as soon as possible. The more surveys we receive the more likely we are to get accurate feedback.

Lynn gave us an update on the bingo fundraiser. The event still needs final club approval. The date is set for May 3rd at the Los Angeles Community Hall. It is easy to get to and the location has a history of success for these types of events. Our club will have 1,000 tickets to sell at 1mil a piece (6 tickets will be 5 mil), and we will provide the 50 prizes. IB will locate the caller, bingo equipment, hall, set up, cooking, and clean up. This event will allow us to work with the community to support education, build our brand, make money and have fun!

We also got an update from Mary Beth on the fundraiser at Mar y Sabor in La Puebla on February 14 for which we're contributing a gift basket to raffle. The event will be from 1-4 with the Poison Dart Frogs playing. The cover of 2500 colones will include tickets for the raffle. They'll also raffle two guitars and proceeds will go to Santa Eulalia band uniforms and to build a new playground in La Puebla. Gifts for the basket can be brought to a Rotary meeting or dropped off at Cynthia's Coldwell Banker Real Estate office.



Guest Speaker

Dmitry Kulakov, a guitar builder, was our guest speaker. He was born in the Soviet Union (which doesn't exist anymore) and then moved to Canada about 25 years ago. He now lives in Costa Rica six months and six months in Canada. Along with building guitars, he has his master's degrees in system engineering and software engineering, and still works as a program manager.

His interest in music started with taking his daughter to piano lessons and deciding he could spend that time learning a musical instrument, too. He tried learning guitar where his daughter studied, but didn't have a good teacher. Then he discovered John McDonald, a great musician and teacher, who taught him guitar and encouraged him to build guitars. Interestingly, as a child he dreamed of building a violin as he was enchanted by the sound.



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Dmitry then studied many books to discover how to make an acoustic guitar that produced excellent sound. He didn't start until he had an idea of what sound he wanted to create, learning from other people's mistakes from many years of guitar building. Building an acoustic guitar with excellent sound is time consuming and challenging. He gets great satisfaction sharing the gift of music with others, and seeing people playing his guitars. Our guest, Chris, delighted us with a composition played on one of the guitars Dmitry brought with him.

Dmitry pointed out that the humidity here in Costa Rica is tough on acoustical instruments. He brought two examples of acoustic guitars he made. He showed us one where the bridge is hidden underneath the instrument. We also saw one with the hole at the side to produce a different sound, and admired the rich black walnut wood on the back of the instrument. He explained that hard woods are usually on the back of a guitar and soft woods on the front. We all admired the fine workmanship. Dmitry has a website at DKGuitars.com.

Club News

Stef announced she is moving to Denver. We will truly miss her! And unfortunately, Nia decided the club wasn't a good fit for her current priorities. So, the Club will be seeking additional officers to serve from July 1, 2026 to June 30, 2027. Please let Russ or Eric know if you are interested.

Member News & Happy \$\$\$

- Joe is happy he's going to Italy and Manhattan
- Laurie is happy to be here and meet us, and to be visiting Lynn and Eric.
- Eric is happy we had a great speaker, and he had a nice week with his friends.

Next Meetings

Breakfast meetings are at 8:30 am at Tica's café. Lunch meetings are 12:20 pm at Iguanas.

- Our next meeting on January 29 is BREAKFAST. The Atenas Bomberos (firefighters) will be there to talk about fire safety.
- On February 5th we'll meet at El Toledo Coffee Farm for a short tour. Time and cost will be announced.
- On February 12 we'll meet for BREAKFAST. District Governor Eugenia will join us for her annual visit.
- On February 19 we'll have LUNCH. Heather Tracy, who runs a program called The Bridge Supportive Gap for young adults, will be the speaker.
- On February 26 we'll meet for BREAKFAST where we'll hear about interesting excursions and experiences in Costa Rica from Robin Sabeen.