



"Rotary allows ordinary people to do extraordinary things."

--Paul P. Harris

Meeting Highlights

Today was the first meeting of our 2026-27 Rotary year. We were very pleased to see such a great turnout! Visitors included Robin, who is attending for the second time and is applying for membership; former Rotarian, Braden and his wife, Genene from NJ (friends of Eric and Lynn); Ricardo, the coach of the Atenas women's futbol team; John W, a friend of Joe's; our speaker, Oscar, and his guests Dusty and Carol. Shannon was also attending her first meeting as an "official club member."

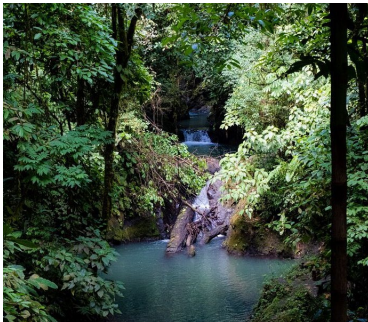
President Eric introduced the new Club Officers and Directors – President Elect Russell, Treasurer Rosie, Secretary Lynn, Sgt-at-Arms Holly, Public Relations Joy, Foundation Director Chris, and not present, Service Project Director Joe. The position of Membership is still open.

More Meeting Highlights

Lynn shared plans for a fellowship weekend with the Garabito/Jaco and Guanacaste clubs, the other two English-speaking Rotary clubs in Costa Rica. The event is scheduled for August 21–23 at Fiesta Resort in Puntarenas and will include fellowship, Rotary sessions led by guest speakers, team-building activities, and more. The cost is \$300 per room for two people, including meals. Details will be emailed out.

The next topic was a travel opportunity to visit Tamandua Biological Reserve. Two guest speakers representing the area talked to us at a previous meeting about their desire to start creating small hands-on group experiences for a 4- or 7-day period. They provided an extensive itinerary and asked us to review it to determine interest. It sounds like a rare opportunity to experience something special. The document will also be sent out by Lynn via email for questions and comments. Group size will be limited to 8, but they can arrange for multiple groups to arrive at different intervals.

Eric shared that David and Karen were visiting last week to pack up their things and sell their car. David is in good spirits and pleased with his medical team. His surgery is scheduled for July 27. David informed us that, while he was back in the States, his ex-wife and daughter were so moved by David's enthusiasm for Rotary, and what our club did for Escuela Jesus, that they donated \$500 each towards the purchase of additional supplies for the school. Karen and David hope to be returning to Costa Rica after the new year. Prayers and our best wishes go out to the two of them.



Tamandua Biological Reserve is in the Osa Peninsula, next to the Corcovado National Park. It is the "most biological intense place on earth" according to National Geographic.



Oscar in the Community

Officers & Committee Chairs

President

Eric Snyder

President Elect

Russell Herold

Treasurer

Rosie Olds

Secretary

Lynn Snyder

Sgt-at-Arms

Holly Herold

Foundation Chair

Chris Toal

Public Image

Joy Nussen

Membership

OPEN POSITION

Minister of Disinformation

Joe Rossi

PR/Website

Shannon Farley

Programs

Leslie Mueller

Sunshine Committee

Betty Van Putten

Fundraising

OPEN POSITION

Club Events

Mary Beth Clark

Service Projects

Joe Rossi

Outreach

OPEN POSITION

Rosie reminded us that she is collecting donations for Venezuela following the recent earthquake. She will be transferring our donations to a district representative, who will forward it to one of the clubs in Venezuela who are organizing the efforts.

Eric is in the process of making some minor modifications to the bylaws. When they are completed, they will be presented for a vote. He proposed a change to club meeting dates – instead of meeting every other Thursday, could we change it to every 1st and 3rd or 2nd and 4th Thursdays. Members discussed and were in favor of the change so he will be checking the calendar to see which option avoids more holidays.

Rosie reminded members that she is now accepting payments for dues. She said we can pay in any manner, but Sinpe is best. We can pay for the year or monthly, we just need to let her know our intentions.

Joy shared that she, Holly and Russell visited the Seniors Home to do some volunteer work. She told us the place is still a mess and that the roof did not hold up against the extreme wind of the tornado. There were trucks there with people removing large pieces of wood and furniture. Our members were tasked with cutting up fabric for personal washcloths. The Home will need help for a long time. Volunteers don't have to sign up or call ahead of time. Thank you Joy, Holly & Russ for donating your time!

Eric discussed a Global Grant asada project that we will probably participate in along with Club Noreste and a Rotary club in Canada. The Canadian club has partnered with Noreste in the past and are inquiring about a global grant for a water project. Since Club Noreste is already doing multiple grants, our Membership Advisor, Maria, suggested that they do a project that would benefit Atenas. Eric reached out to the community and was able to find an asada project in the works in Alto de Naranja de San Isidro. They have been mandated to provide water flow to fire hydrants, and they wish to include flow to residents. They are in the process of putting a plan together. A grant would allow them to purchase materials.

Chris has invited members to enjoy a Movie Matinee at his house on Sunday, July 26. The movie is called Join or Die and discusses the value of belonging to an organization or club. Please RSVP to Chris and bring your popcorn!

The Program

Oscar joined us to talk about his Facebook page Oscar in the Community, a site dedicated to activism and volunteerism. It was created based on an observation that the desire to volunteer is a cultural element that expats bring with them, but at times there is disconnect between donating and needs due to language barriers. Additionally, he sees that there is a certain amount of caution in the Tico community due to a lack trust and understanding intentions. Ticos tend to help out on an individual basis, he found, but not join together with organizations. Oscar is originally from Honduras and spent about 25 years living in the US where he taught bilingual education to inner-city youth. He would be interested in helping our club work with other clubs and the community by bridging language and cultural gaps in local volunteerism.

Other News

We briefly discussed the success of our Bingo event. Joy shared how pleased some of our sponsors were in receiving thank you certificates. We should consider this for future events.

Eric told us that Joe has made arrangements for the purchase of the changing table and yoga mats for the day care center in town. He will be home from his vacation soon and the Outreach Committee will make arrangements to deliver them and get some great PR shots.

Our guest, Ricardo, thanked the club for previous support of the women's futbol team, and intends to share the schedule for training and games to encourage attendance. The team still struggled to meet their financial needs and is always looking for sponsors. Ricardo also shared his extensive background. Atenas is privileged to have such an established and experienced coach.

Joy voiced concerns regarding bullying and mental health in local schools. She suggested that we incorporate bullying into our focus on education.

Member News & Happy Dollars

The club sang happy birthday to Rosie. There were several people who contributed happy dollars. Unfortunately, no one was taking notes, so we'll push those happy moments out into the universe.

Upcoming Meetings and Events

Our next meeting will be on July 30 at 9am at our normal breakfast location, Entre Cafeteria. The speaker will be Nolan from Club San Jose. He will be talking about the upcoming Walking/Rafting/Cycling event planned for Polio Awareness.

IMPORTANT - There will be NO regular meeting on August 6, but **there will be back-to-back meetings July 13 and 20** due to the District Governors meeting on August 20. The next meeting after that will be September 3. At that time, we will begin our new schedule of every 1st and 3rd Thursdays of the month.

We are putting together our new website which will include a club calendar so that it's easier for all of us to plan for our busy schedules!



Eric and Lynn attended the monthly Presidents and Secretaries meeting in San Jose (called COPRES). All 14 clubs were represented. There's lots of exciting things planned throughout the District this Rotary year! (Spoiler alert – Rotary will celebrate 100 years in Costa Rica!)