

## **Why The Rotary Club of Indio is the Best Club**

The Rotary Club of Indio may not be a large club with a large annual budget, but we are extremely proud of the work that we do and what we've been able to accomplish this year. We ended this year with our signature event, the 27<sup>th</sup> Annual Math Field Day which continues to grow after Covid. This year we hosted a few hundred middle school students from 11 local schools from all 3 local schools districts.

Along with Math Field Day, our club has been busy throughout the year raising money and holding small events to give back to the Indio community. We started this year by donating dictionaries and reading books to all 3<sup>rd</sup> grade students within the Indio elementary schools. We also loved providing transportation services to 9 of the 12 Indio elementary schools to allow 3<sup>rd</sup> grade students to visit the Coachella Valley History Museum to learn about the wonderful and rich history of our valley.

In the fall, we were awarded the Wallis C Jones grant which allowed us to provide Thanksgiving dinner to the wonderful residents of Horizon Senior Center in Indio. More than half of our club members, along with our Shadow Hills High School Interact students, served dinner and visited with these seniors to bring them some of the joy of the holiday season. We continued the holiday giving by gifting blankets to farm labor workers and toys to the children at the Fred Young Farm Labor Center. Our Interact students joined us for this event as well and had a great time helping the children pick out just the right toy.

Our Interact students were quite involved with our club this year. They enjoyed events like serving Thanksgiving dinner and handing out blankets and toys but also did so much more. In addition to their weekly meetings with Youth Services Chair and President-Elect, Dennis Sheehan, these wonderful students helped us sell tickets for our 2<sup>nd</sup> annual Golf Ball Drop at Food Truck Fridays, the Indio City BBQ, and 2<sup>nd</sup> Saturday events, they served several Saturdays at the FIND Food Bank, participated in float building of the Rotary float for the 2024 Rose Parade, volunteered with our club at the Tour de Palm Springs and our 3<sup>rd</sup> annual Festival of Local Creatives and helped out at Math Field Day. Along with these youth services, our club was excited to send 8 students and 2 alumni students to RYLA camp, have a Shadow Hills/Interact student take part in the District's 4-Way Test speech contest and we are looking forward to awarding 11 well-deserving Shadow Hills HS seniors with college scholarships.

We were excited to partner with several other Rotary clubs in the valley this year. In November, we teamed up with Indio Sunrise to put on the 2<sup>nd</sup> annual Golf Ball Drop event as well as a collaborative fundraising effort between our two clubs at Indio's 2<sup>nd</sup> Saturday events that spanned 10 months. In addition, we partnered with the Palm Desert Rotary Club in sponsoring students for RYLA camp, and partnered with the Coachella East Rotary Club to facilitate parking at this year's Date Festival.

Our club loves to serve Rotary both at a District level and a national level. Club member and PDG Don Casper continues to serve District 5330 and is chairing this year's Ignite Festival. We also have two members, Stacy Fifield and Chris Schultz serving as Assistant Governors this year. In addition to his AG role, Chris Schultz is also a board member for the North American chapter of the Rotary Action

Group on Addiction Prevention where he is facilitating bringing drug prevention education into schools.

By far, our favorite project this year was the delivering of a much needed, fully operational Fire Engine to the people of Tuxtepec, Oaxaca, Mexico where they were fighting fires with garden hoses and buckets from the back of a pickup truck. This project began in IPP Chris Schultz's year by securing a donation of a retired 2002 fire truck from Riverside County. We were then able to work with the Rotary Club in Oaxaca, boarder agencies, and others to arrange transport of the truck to Mexico and on March 2, 2024, this amazing gift was given to the people of Oaxaca. The truck was greeted with a parade through the city and a blessing from the local bishop. We continue to receive thank you's and videos from Oaxaca showing the truck in action and we are extremely proud to have been able to live out the 4-Way Test with this special gift.

These are some of the many examples as to why we believe that the Rotary Club of Indio, in it's 75<sup>th</sup> year, is the best club in District 5330.

