CALIFORNIA WOMEN FOR AGRICULTURE

Chapter: *Ventura County*

What is your signature event?

VC CWA has not had a specific signature event for the past several years. Our chapter has, however, assisted several other local organizations with their special events. The two events that we are most known for occur in August and October.

Elanie & Ana Cavaletto-Lemonade Tasting @ Ventura County Fair

In August, our chapter participates as co-host of the Agriculture Building during the Ventura County Fair. During this time, VC CWA members meet, greet, and visit with virtually everyone who comes into that building and help build their excitement for local agriculture. We also lend a hand with several classic Fair events - like Lemonade Tasting on Citrus Day, the Beer/Wine Pairings on "Bounty of the County" days, and others. We have also always received a generous donation from the Fair in consideration of our service, which we use to supplement our scholarship program.

VC CWA Volunteers

Our chapter volunteers for the Santa Paula Rotary in October, assisting them during their annual pumpkin patch. We help families enjoy local agriculture, pumpkins, and more every Friday, Saturday, and Sunday in October. Santa Paula Rotary, in return, shares a generous donation for our support that we then apply towards our scholarship program.

Scholarships- What kind of scholarships do you give out (only agriculture-related majors)? Do you have memorial scholarships? Do you have any outstanding past recipients?

During our scholarship banquets, we recognize the recipients of our agricultural-related scholarships. As always, we are grateful to our scholarship sponsors -Topa-Topa Flywheelers: Antique Gas Engine & Tractor Club, Mission Produce, Various Chapter Members, and the Vanoni Family, who enabled us to invest in the next generation of leaders for Ventura Agriculture.

This year we gave out five scholarships of $1,500 each. The recipients of our agricultural-related scholarships were *Stella De Busschere & Aiden Schindel* -Topa-Topa Flywheelers Scholarship; *Kayley Meyring*- Agricultural Family Scholarship; and *Samuel Hoyt*-General VC CWA Scholarship.

Kayley Meyring and Family

Lucy Vanoni
1924-2023

Earlier in the year, long-time VC CWA member Lucy Vanoni passed away. Her family asked if we would be willing to have a memorial scholarship put into place honoring her service and dedication to the chapter. Due to the generous support of the Vanoni family, their friends, as well as many other individuals, the Lucy Vanoni Memorial Scholarship was created. *Kodi Sieben* was the first recipient of the scholarship, and our chapter looks forward to continuing this scholarship for years to come.

Do you have any special events to build membership?

We are searching for new creative ideas to help our current members bond and build events to encourage our membership growth. In January, we hold our "kick-off meeting," after our business is completed, we invite members to stay longer and enjoy a social, which is what we consider our Membership Kick off.

We are also searching for events that worked well in the past and thinking of ways to "modernize" them. Additionally, VC CWA invites community members to come and be guest speakers at our general meetings, we co-host with VC Farm Bureau, CoLAB, and VC Cattlemen Association for a quarterly *Women in Ag Social Mixer*, we also volunteer at other local agricultural-related events, and hold chapter socials.

History perspective – Do you have any charter members? If so, who are they? Do you have any past state presidents in your chapter? If so, who are they? Get pictures of them.

Presently, none of our members have been charter members for our chapter. Ventura County CWA is proud to say that there have been 3 past State Presidents from our chapter. Unfortunately, none of these past presidents are currently members.

What is unique about your chapter and what contributes to its longevity?

VC CWA was among one of the founding chapters in the Golden State. In 1976, Kay Wilson-Bolton and Carolyn Leavens worked countless hours to establish a chapter by hosting organizational meetings throughout Ventura County. Due to the interest and participation of many individuals and businesses, the Ventura County Chapter was adopted. Many of our members have served as state officers, task force directors, district directors, and CWA State Presidents. Our membership is comprised of growers and consumers; individuals, volunteers, leaders, business owners, and students; both men and women. Ventura County CWA works actively to promote agriculture by equipping our members with the knowledge and skills necessary to convey the mutual benefits of a vibrant agricultural economy and healthy rural communities, thus benefiting the future of agriculture in California.