



CONNECTIONS

ISSUE 1 — SEPTEMBER, 2021

Featured Stories in this Issue



PDG Bob Duistermars



PDG Marilyn Sanderson



DGE Olivia Patterson-Ryans

Special Message from Rotary Southwest PETS Chair Bob Duistermars



Hello Presidents Elect!

We are so excited about hosting each of you at this year's President Elect Training Seminar (PETS) in February at the beautiful, and newly refurbished LAX Marriott Resort! This monthly mailing will give you information on what we are planning for PETS and let you know

what you will be doing as we approach this amazing event. We are working closely with your District Governor Elect to make sure our training will prepare you for your upcoming Rotary Leadership position. We are all "On Your Team" so if you have any questions or need specific information, please contact

your DGE as soon as possible; they will know exactly how to get you the information you need.

PDG Bob Duistermars (D 5330)
Rotary Club of Hemet Sunrise

The Teacher's *PETS*

Education Chair Marilyn Sanderson



If Rotary Southwest PETS education were a motion picture, the director and screenwriter would be PDG Marilyn Sanderson (D 5340, San Diego).

Marilyn was born in Newport News, Virginia and grew up in Guthrie, Oklahoma. She earned a BA in Education from Oklahoma State University and an MS in Education from Wichita State University. She taught secondary language arts for many years before becoming a professional union negotiator and organizer for teachers in Oklahoma and California. She retired from the California Teachers Association in 2004.

Marilyn was president of the Rotary Club of La Mesa Sunrise in 2009-10, later serving her district as assistant governor, public image chair and executive aide to the district governor. She became district governor in 2016-17. Retiring from real estate, she moved to the desert, where she quickly became the president of the Rotary Club of Rancho Mi-

rage.

When asked to describe in a word the reason for attending PETS, Marilyn used three. "It's valuable, challenging, and rewarding," she says. These are the reasons I've been involved with PETS for the past 11 years."

How does she remember her own experience as a "PE"? "My first PETS as a club president-elect was a blur. Information by firehose," she says. "A thick binder of printed information from my DGE. (I admit I put it on a bookshelf...permanently)."

Determined to improve PETS, Marilyn proceeded to roll up her sleeves. "Since that first PETS, I've served as a presenter, facilitator and moderator as well as chairing the PETS Education Committee for four years to develop the curriculum – I loved that! Capturing the interest of the PEs, providing hands on materials, and challenging them to participate, learn and get to know each other – those are my consistent goals.

"I've served in many clubs, district and zone roles, including district governor. Every one of those positions was a learning experience providing me with what I need to be effective and inspiring for PEs. PETS is an exciting adventure, a challenge adapting to change and so rewarding to see the light bulb come on in the eyes of presidents elect. I wouldn't miss PETS for anything!

"And of course, the education sessions are a group effort," she says. "The talented, experienced and dedicated members of the Education Committee get the credit for the curriculum."

The energetic PETS education chair is looking forward to resuming the program in person at the LAX Marriott Hotel. During the weekend, take time to say hello. She is always eager to meet the new students.

DGE Olivia Patterson-Ryans



"I am the oldest of six children," Olivia begins. "So, I learned leadership, management, organization, accountability and responsibility at a very early age. I did not realize I had these skills until later in my adult life. My siblings labeled my attributes as bossy, controlling, nosy and demanding...thus I was labeled," she says laughing.

"After graduating from Pepperdine University with degrees in math and psychology, I taught high school algebra and geometry, earning teacher of the year from LA Unified School District. After obtaining my master's degree, I worked as a high school counselor and dean of students. It had been my intention to be a high school principal, but working as an administrator, I became disillusioned with the politics of education."

Olivia turned next to employment in the auto industry as a fleet manager, while also designing a sales course for employees in commercial trucks sales. From there her new skills led to a career in commercial real estate, where she today specializes in apartment building and property in probate. Desiring to build a stronger connection with the

community, Olivia became involved in the chamber of commerce, and, in due course, Rotary.

"Rotary has become a major part of my life," she says. "I work and play with people from every community and from all over the world. Some have become my best friends. And what a joy it is to have a life partner (Rotarian Robert Ryans) who shares my Rotary values and experiences," she says.

"PETS for me was like leaving my tight knit family and community and going off to university for the first time," she recalls. "My exposure to the district, to Rotary International leaders and to other presidents elect expanded my Rotary world. Meeting and talking with Rotarians outside of my club stimulated my imagination and creativity. I went back to my club with fresh new ideas, several of which were accepted and implemented by my fellow club members.

"I was my club president in 2006-07. Since then, PETS has evolved, maintaining its relevancy to the times. It only gets *'gooder and gooder.'* At PETS you will be joined by presi-

dents-elect from seven other districts. You will have the opportunity to not only learn from Rotarian leaders, but you will also meet new friends, sharing ideas and best practices and forming partnerships with Rotarians from all over the Western United States, including Hawaii!

"Is this your second time around as president and you think you've been there, done that?" she asks. "I guarantee you, PETS 2022 will benefit you also! We have all been changed by the pandemic and the social/financial issues of the day. So has Rotary. As president of your club, your members will look to you for guidance in maintaining, nurturing, and growing membership. They will need your direction to be meaningful in your changing community. Are you ready to face the challenges and needs of our ever-changing world? PETS will help sharpen your skills and give you some new tools to effectively serve your membership and community."

It seems the former high school teacher still finds joy in education. "I look forward to seeing you there," she says with the warm smile of a hostess. She might have added, "Don't be late to class!"

Get Ready For A Fun Weekend
at 2022 PETS!



Editor: PDG Greg O'Brien (D5280)
gobrien2012.2013@gmail.com