

SPOKES NEWSLETTER

DISTRICT 5300 * Rotary Club 794 * July 18, 2025 * #01-026 www.pasadenarotary.com

THIS WEEK'S PROGRAM BRANDON LAMAR

President, Pasadena NAACP
"Making a Difference, Yesterday & Today"

INTRODUCER: VENICE DUNN



Brandon D. Lamar is a force for change, a bold visionary whose life's work is dedicated to justice, equity, and the empowerment of marginalized communities. As the President of the Pasadena NAACP and Vice-Chair of the Pasadena Rental Housing Board, Brandon is on the front lines of advocacy, championing policies that dismantle systemic barriers and create opportunities for all.

A lifelong Pasadenan with deep generational roots, Brandon has spent years shaping the landscape of civic leadership. He was instrumental in the establishment of Pasadena's Police Oversight Board and Pasadena Rent Stabilization Department, groundbreaking initiatives. His unwavering commitment to civil rights has made him a

respected voice in both local and statewide conversations on justice, policy reform, and community empowerment.

Brandon is not just a leader—he is a builder of leaders. As the founder of Merge Black Pasadena, the Young Kings Mentoring Retreat, and the Dena Relief Drive, he has cultivated spaces where young people, community members, and changemakers can unite, grow, and take action. His ability to forge strategic coalitions has led to meaningful, lasting change.

Beyond Pasadena, Brandon is a sought-after speaker, advocate, and thought leader,

bringing his passion for social justice to the national stage. Whether fighting for housing rights, amplifying marginalized voices, or mobilizing communities for collective action, he stands as a beacon of hope and progress as the youngest President of any NAACP in the nation.

At the heart of it all, Brandon is grounded by faith, family, and an unshakable belief in the power of unity. He and his wife, Keayera Lamar, MFT, work tirelessly to build a future where every voice is heard, every life is valued, and lasting transformation is not just a possibility—but a promise.

WEDNESDAY – JULY 23rd, 2025

UNIVERSITY CLUB OF PASADENA

LUNCH BUFFET: 12:00 PM - MEETING: 12:30 PM 175 N. Oakland Ave, Pasadena 91101

Non-members are welcome - \$45.00 includes lunch

RSVP A MUST - Deadline: 5:00 pm MONDAY

OVERFLOW PARKING: Pasadena Heritage Blinn House Enter parking off Madison Ave. - Do not park in any reserved parking space

Meeting Host: President Hillary Schenk Reception: Alan Schier & Mike Bernard Song Leader: PP Phil Miles

Lunchtime Pianist: Ann Louise Christensen

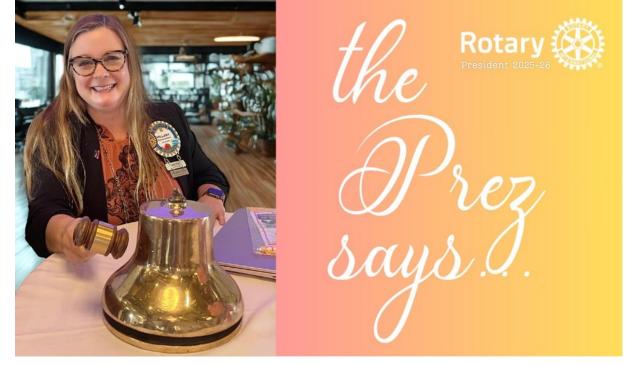
Inspiration: Cedrick Jihanian

Scoot Zone Reporter: PP Mary Lou Byrne Photographer: PE Tammy Silver & Gui Bittencourt

Technical: Frank Fish & Scott Carlson Sergeant At Arms: Robert Lyons

Meeting is also on ZOOM opens at 12:00 pm

https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86515101523?pwd=dHhNZnV5c2ZqbzNQbWthbDNhYTladz09 Meeting ID: 865 1510 1523. - Passcode: 667356



Music Is Magic: Why a Good Song Feels Like a Superpower

There's no spellbook, no wand, and yet—one song can turn a regular Wednesday into a mini adventure. That's the quiet magic of music.

Think about it: you're sitting in traffic, tapping your steering wheel, slightly grumpy. Then that song comes on. Somehow, the same road looks cooler, the sunlight feels warmer, and your mood lifts. I left our meeting the past two weeks singing the songs our music committee performed... and it makes me smile.





Music doesn't just fill silence. It sets a mood, creates a vibe, and transports us. A sad song knows exactly how to keep us company when we're feeling blue, and a fast-paced tune somehow gives us an extra burst of energy to finish that workout—or at least make it through washing the dishes.

There's actual science behind this, of course. Our brains release dopamine, the feel-good chemical, when we listen to songs we love. But even without knowing the biology, we all instinctively feel it. Music can unite a room full of Rotarians in a sing-along, or let us travel back in time just by hearing the first few notes of an old favorite.

So next time you need a little boost or a change of scenery (without actually going anywhere), press play. You might be surprised where music's quiet magic takes you.

What's your go-to magic song? Seriously, email me and be entered to win a gift card. There are two songs that seem to pop up all through my life: The first is Sing, which I first head on "Sesame Street. The second is What a Wonderful World -- the song my dad ended each of his concerts with, the recessional song at my wedding, and the last song I played for my father as he passed from this world.

Hillary S. Schenk
President 2025-2026
Rotary Club of Pasadena

ATTENDING THE MEETING MEALS & SEATING ARE
PROVIDED BASED ON RSVP'S WE
RECEIVE

Please RSVP if you are attending! office@pasadenarotary.com

BUFFET opens at 12:00 pm MEETING starts at 12:30 pm

CLICK HERE TO RSVP TODAY

ROTARY VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES & EVENTS



PHOTO OF THE WEEK

According to PE
Tammy Silver, who
captured this photo:
Pelon means "bald"
in Spanish.

L2R: Zoot Velasco, Jim Osterling, Frank Fish

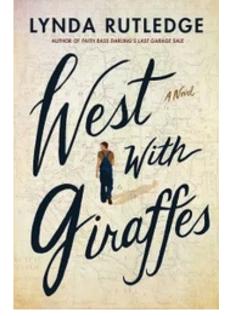
& Scott Carlson agreed to be "Founding Members of the Pasadena Rotary Pelon Club"

ROTARY READERS

Rotary Readers will meet August 4 at 6 pm to review West With Giraffes by Lynda Rutledge.

Please RSVP to Helen Baatz at *mhbaatz@gmail.com*.

We will also announce the selection of books for this new Rotary year starting with September







The Scoot Zone By Staff Reporter Dean Billman

Photographers: PE Tammy Silver & Gui Bittencourt

President Hillary Schenk rang the Big Brass Rotary Bell at 12:30 pm to kick off the first speaker meeting of her new year. She introduced Jonathan Edewards as our song leader today, and he led us in singing Blue Skies by Irving Berlin. We hope this is the theme for her whole year!





Tyros member **Martha Shenkenberg** offered a sports-oriented inspiration, noting sports is not always about winning, but it is the shared

not always about winning, but it is the shared experiences that unite us – like Rotary.

President Hillary (after thanking Ann Louise Christensen for her wonderful lunch entertainment on the piano and celebrating **Sandi Mejia's** birthday) realized the one thing all new Rotary Presidents forget in their first meeting - as the standing audience shifted from foot to foot - her next order after the Inspiration was finally, "Please sit down."

Guests:

- · Mike Driebe, Immediate Past District Governor
- · PP Howard Raff introduced Larry Weiss, a prospective incoming member
- **Mic Hansen** also introduced a prospective new member, Sonya Sharififard, a leadership instructor and professor
- · Wende Lee introduced a new guest, Michael Ferrera, a financial advisor

Announcements:

- President Hillary welcomed Mike Driebe, IPDG, who presented Hillary with a District 5300 Bronze Club Award for Community Service, and a Gold Award for Club Service, all earned during PP Stephen Smith's Rotary year.
- Amanda Pumilia, leader of the Pasadena Rotary Impact Club (our companion club for busy professionals), announced incoming President Hillary's welcome cocktail party at her and PP Justene Adamec's home (see announcement).
- PP **Cathy Simms** announced the Rotary Readers 2025-2026 book search is on and invited all to attend their next meeting (see announcement).
- **Zoot Velasco**, of Pasadena Heritage (across the street from the University Club) urged all to attend the Pasadena Bridge Party this Saturday, July 19th. Get tickets, join the fun "getting drunk on the Bridge is a great way to celebrate Pasadena"
- Alan Schier, known as the Pasadena Rotary Badge Master, asked us to apply for badge "Hangers" those brass plates that dangle beneath the name badge with current or past offices held. **PP Justene** currently holds the record of six (6) brass "Hangers". Volunteer to be a Board member or President and you can qualify for one, too.



- Dean Billman, District 5300 Polio Plus Chair, reminded the club of Rotary International's original commitment over 30 years ago to help eradicate the Polio virus, which is only transmitted from infected human to human, and if we can stop the virus from spreading, it can be eradicated. But cases are being registered again around the world, and we must continue until the last virus exists "we are so close." To that end, he encouraged everyone this year to give an annual \$100 to the Polio Plus society, and that he needs help organizing "Ponies for Polio" at Santa Anita Park this coming January 2026. o After hours notes: **PP Kathy Meagher** came up to Dean after the meeting and committed the first \$100 of the drive. **Jim Osterling** emailed that he wanted to contribute \$100, too.
- o **Peggy Kelley** volunteered to help Dean with the Ponies for Polio.



 Tyros co-chair Wende Lee attended a Rotary meeting in Cambria (where she maintains a vacation home) and presented President Hillary with an official club banner.
 Wende learned that their motto is, "If it ain't fun, it ain't Rotary." She reported the meeting was fun.

President Hillary was excited to pre-introduce our speaker today, saying that she really believed in youth sports and besides participating in sports in her youth, she enjoyed participating in her family's youth sports and all the non-

profits that she helped raise money for youth sports. And she has a love of soccer. She then called to the floating podium PP **Kathy Meagher**.

Past-President **Kathy Meagher** (one of the first women to join Rotary in 1987), said that she had prepared notes, but having left them at home, could recite the essence of her introduction of PP **Ken Joe** – that she approved Ken's Rotary application in her Presidential year of 2015, and just five years later, he ascended to be our Rotary President, and she said anyone can become President – it just took the attitude "to always say Yes. So, to all our new members, when asked to help in any project, just say Yes."

PP Ken started out his coaching career probably like most parents, just volunteering to coach their kids as a good way to introduce the children to sports and maybe bond with them. In



Ken's case, he hoped they would enjoy baseball like he did, as a diehard SF Giants fan, and soccer was just an introduction to team sports. However, the three sons really took to soccer over baseball ("Too slow! Not enough time with the ball. Three or four at-bats – ugh!") and soon Coach Ken found himself coaching his soccer team, and other kids' teams, and somehow became an AYSO President and past commissioner.



Ken broke his presentation into three parts: The benefits of youth sports; the role that an organization like AYSO plays to make sure the kids all have fun and learn the right way to compete, win or lose; and lessons he has learned the hard way as a field coach and AYSO commissioner.

Having three sons in Alhambra league of AYSO (which encompasses almost all the local San Gabriel Valley with over 2,000 players on 150 teams) he got first-hand experience of seeing all the kids learn to cooperate as a team, to grow as a teammate, and to give each kid a chance to participate. For the 6–8-year-olds, they guarantee ¾ of play for each game, and for the older kids, the guarantee ½ a game on the field – and it is strictly enforced. His own sons made life-long friends playing local soccer, and Ken stills keep in touch with parents over the years through his AYSO experience.



It was interesting, in a world of online personal tech focus, how AYSO encourages and structures the players at all ages to get involved, play fair, and build better competitive spirit, and to learn to win and lose gracefully. AND THERE SEEMS TO BE A LOT OF PHYSICAL CONTACT. Ken recalled lots of player/referee/parent bad examples of sportsmanship, and how he had to mediate or oversee conflict resolution. Instead of online bullying behavior, apparently people still get overly passionate about their children, and bad behavior still exists on the field.

To that end, AYSO has several guiding principles, and we all can learn from them:

1. Good Sportsmanship

- 2. Positive Coaching
- 3. Player Development
- 4. Balanced Teams
- 5. Everyone Plays
- 6. Open Registration

And finally, "Kids play, parents cheer!"

While we at Rotary have our Four-Way Test, it is nice to see similar rules for kids in the world that have such a positive impact, and coaches like **PP Ken** to guide them in their formative years.

President Hillary thanked PP Ken and gave him her Presidential gift, a pair of Rotary

socks – that way he can always walk the walk while thinking of his next Service Beyond Self project!



L2R: PE Tammy Silver, IPDG Mike Driebe, President Hillary, Mike Bernard, Jeannine Bogaard, Jonathan Edewards, PP Kathy Meagher, PP Ken Joe

HAPPY BIRTHDAY!!

Chad Agustin	July 18
Dede Venkat	July 19
Amanda Pumilia	July 21
PP Jim Graunke	July 24

HAPPY ROTAVERSARY!!

Mic Hansen	7/18/06	19 Years
Past President Bob Monk	7/22/19	6 Years as Honorary

UPCOMING PROGRAMS

July 30, 2025 - Paul Harris Fellow Community Awards

August 6, 2025 - Sara Safari - Climb Your Everest

August 13, 2025 - Robert Shoji - When Little Tokyo was Bronzeville

August 20, 2025 - Dowell Myers - How We Got to Today's Housing Crisis

SPOKES is the weekly newsletter published by the Rotary Club of Pasadena

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Bureau Chief: Mary Lou Byrne Spokes Chair/Publisher/Editor: Wendy Anderson

Scoot Zone Reporters: Mary Lou Byrne & Dean Billman

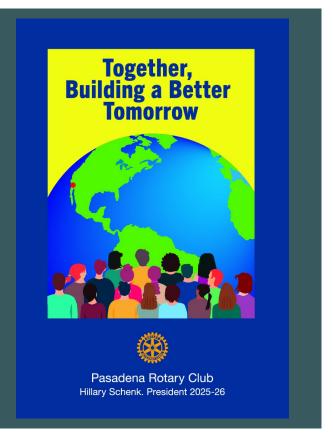
Photographers: Tammy Silver & Gui

Bittencourt.

Graphic Design: Wende Lee

Proofers: Kathy Meagher & Amanda

Pumilia



ROTARY CLUB OF PASADENA 2025-2026 BOARD OF DIRECTORS MEETS the 3rd Thursday of every month at 5pm - University Club of Pasadena

PRESIDENT: Hillary Schenk
PRESIDENT ELECT: Tammy Silver
SECRETARY: Wende Lee
TREASURER: Allison Burgos

CLUB DIRECTORS: Don Andrues, Mike Bernard, George Falardeau, Frank Fish, J.P. Harris, Debi Kroman, Robert Lyons, David McAlexander, Deb Raupp, Nevino Rocco,

Alan Schier, Dede Venkat

Non-Voting Member: Amanda Pumilia, Chair, The Impact Club

Rotary Club of Pasadena

MAILING ADDRESS: 556 South Fair Oaks Ave., Suite 101, #379 Pasadena, CA 91105

Wendy Anderson, Administrator - 626-683-8243 - office@pasadenarotary.com Sandi Mejia-Ramirez, Accountant - 626-272-3424 - sandimejia@sbcglobal.net www.pasadenarotary.com Pasadena Rotary Club | 556 South Fair Oaks Ave. Suite 101, #379 | Pasadena, CA 91105 US

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