



# PASADENA ROTARY CLUB

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# ROTARY INTERNATIONAL

## SPOKES NEWSLETTER

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### This Week's Program

Guest Speaker: Dr. Christopher West, Professor of History

Topic: Green Book, Black History

Introducer: **Diana Peterson-More**



Dr. Christopher West is on the faculty of Pasadena City College, where his creative and dynamic teaching inspires students to delve deeply into the complexities of American history and grapple with both the aspirations and contradictions of the country's founding beliefs.

A native Angeleno, Dr. West transitioned to the academy completing his

doctoral thesis "More Than My Color: Race, Space and Politics in Black Los Angeles, 1940 - 1968," at the University of Southern California (USC) where he was the first African American man to take a Ph.D. in History from that institution. His service to USC included directing the Norman Topping Student Aid Fund that assisted economically disadvantaged and ethnically

underrepresented students. West's arts administration experience includes service as the curator of history for the California African American Museum in Los Angeles where he originated and designed exhibitions that traveled nationally.

Dr. West received his B.A. in American History from the University of California, Berkeley and earned his Ph.D. in American History from the University of Southern California.

## **Green Book**

Originating in 1937 as *The Negro Motorist Green-Book*, Victor Green a postal carrier in New York, published a 15 pages handbook of hotels, restaurants and businesses that catered to African American travelers. For 30 years with the assistance of a network of postal carriers and motorists the Green Book offered information for families traveling in racially segregated Jim Crow America. Utilizing interactive web based guides and original source materials this talk will offer rotary members a glimpse of one facet of the entrepreneurship and innovation of Black families to enjoy the benefits of private automotive travel in the United States.

Accompanist: **Ross Jutsum**

Song Leader: **Elisabeth Browne**

Inspiration: **Gail Scanlan**

Sergeant at Arms: **Robert Lyons**

## **Inspiration Station**

by **President Mary Lou Byrne**



Pasadena Rotary, didn't we have a good time this week hearing about the goings-on at the Pasadena Playhouse under the leadership of their dynamic Producing Artistic Director? And wasn't it fun to have such a big group of guests, including visiting Rotarians, local theatre lovers, and prospective members? We were really firing on all fun-having cylinders, for sure!!

And in do-gooding news, as I write we are only hours away from our Rotary Humanitarian STAR Awards, which will be in the books by the time you read this. It's been a huge undertaking for our Club, but I have been so

thrilled and humbled by the way so many of you have stepped up the help, whether by working tirelessly on the planning committee, or being event sponsors, or just answering the call to buy a ticket. You all are the best. The SUPER best.

That's all for now because I'm racing off to get ready for the big event. Keep those calls, emails, and texts coming. How about sending me some photos of your Valentine(s) for our February slide show? I'm always right here at 310-710-7701 and [president@pasadenarotary.com](mailto:president@pasadenarotary.com)!

Yours in pulling off the big event,

**Mary Lou**

## Scout Zone

By **Justene Adamec**, Bureau Chief

**Phyllis Currie**, along with **Ross Jutsum**, led us in *Give My Regards to Broadway* and *America the Beautiful*.

**Jim Oesterling** gave our inspiration, sharing quotes about the theater from Stella Adler, Shakespeare, Oscar Wilde, Terrence Mann, and Sir Laurence Olivier, among others.

**First Gentleman Gary Kearney** got into his chef costume and rang the call to dinner bells, which you can hear at Sunday Supper at Chateau Kearney. There are openings for many Sundays coming up. Sign up in the lobby!

**Pat President Frank Nicholas**, with his arm in a sling, announced that it was time for the Nominating Committee to start its task. The Nominating Committee consists of the President, the President Elect, 4 past presidents and 3 at large members. The Nominating Committee will be picking 4 new board members who will serve for 3 years starting in January. To be a board member, a candidate must be a member in good standing and have chaired a committee.

Ballots were distributed for the nominating committee! Results to be announced at the end of the meeting.

**President Mary Lou Byrne** gave **Frank** a Be The Inspiration Coin for doing all that with one arm tied in front of him.

On to the DoGooding and FunHaving opportunities.

DoGooding - **Cathy Simms** announced that Caring Little Hearts is raising money for its

second year of providing heart surgeries for children in India. Thanks to Global Grants, it takes only \$88 of your dollars to give one surgery to a child with a congenital heart defect. Donate [online](#) or fill out a heart donation card in the lobby at the meetings.

Funhaving - **Norma Mardelli's** daughter, Aline, is the supervisor of Season Tickets for the LA Galaxy. There is a fantastic opportunity for all area Rotary members. Opening night tickets are available for \$28. It's March 2nd and it's sure to sell out. If you let Norma know, all Pasadena members can sit together. First 100 buyers will get a LA Galaxy/ Rotary International banner.

**President Mary Lou** announced that there has been and will be a lot of fundraising for things like Community Grants, Teachers of Excellence and Dan Stover. Thanks to **Past President Kathy Meagher**, the Pasadena Rotary Foundation has put new accounting in place, which will make it easier to make tax deductible donations. For that, **Kathy** got Inspirational Rotarian of the Week.

The International Projects Committee is meeting next week on February 7th at 6pm.

**President Elect Scott Vandrick** introduced our speaker, Danny Feldman, Producing Artistic Director, Pasadena Playhouse. Danny Feldman represents the theme of *Be The Inspiration* very well. Pasadena Playhouse will again rise to one of the premier playhouses in the country and is also positioning to be a hub for the community.

In 2016, Danny was invited to join the Playhouse. He was born and raised here but liked NY and what he was doing. He was part of an off-Broadway company and his work had already garnered him a Tony nomination.

However, the Playhouse had merged the artistic director and managing director positions. Very few theaters had done that. It intrigued him so he accepted. Then he found out how serious the financial difficulties were. In Fiscal year 15, the Playhouse lost \$773,000 and in 16, it lost \$1.7 million.

From 1917 through the 1950s, the Playhouse was one of the top theaters in the *world*. It produced over 300 shows in a year for 5 theaters on the site. In 1937, it was declared the State Theater of California.

It produced the first non-Broadway production of *Our Town*. Tennessee Williams premiered 3 of his plays there. Other playwrights working there included Noel Coward, Eugene O'Neill, F. Scott Fitzgerald. When Hollywood was transitioning to talkies, the studios formed an acting school at Pasadena Playhouse. The students included Gene Hackman and Dustin Hoffman.

**Jim Oesterling** and **Past President Philip Miles** won 2 tickets to Ragtime for knowing some of the answers.

In 2016, they knew worth it was fighting for; restoring a cultural asset, honoring a legacy and moving that legacy forward.

They turned over 80% of the staff bringing in new vision and new energy. Key players were lured from other places including the Ahmanson and the Music Center. They brought in many new board members and did a full assessment of the physical plant. Loans were paid

down or converted to donations. On the artistic side, they also brought in top tier talent like Jason Alexander, Al Pacino, and Judith Light.

The LA Times called the recent production of *Our Town* a production that was reborn for a new era and the NY Times praised it. The LA Times called *King Charles III* one of the best plays in NY, LA and London

Nationwide, the average age of theatergoers is 65-70. For the *Pirates of Penzance*, the average age was 45. For *Belleville*, the average age was 29. *Belleville* was on the Pulitzer Prize short list. If you were over 60, you likely hated it. If you were under 50, chances are you really liked it.

They raised the price point for some tickets and lowered many of them, including the side seats in Row C, to \$25. Their Community@Play gives away tickets to community groups. The entire 7th grade of PUSD got to see a play for free.

The first annual block party last year brought together community groups to put on performances and host booths. 15,000 people attended. The now Annual Block Party will be June 8th this year.

As a result of these efforts, in Fiscal year 17, the Playhouse made \$755,000 and in FY18, \$1,475,000

They are about to put on their most ambitious production yet. *Ragtime* will have a 17 piece orchestra, a 21 member cast and a Model T onstage.

**Kathy Meagher** and **Debbie Loveland** asked questions.

The Nominating Committee at large members are **Michelle Ferroni**, **Julie Bank**, and **Paul Martin**.

**President Mary Lou** told us to Go Out There and Be the Inspiration.

## Upcoming Events



### ["Caring Little Hearts"](#)

Over the last two years, Rotary Club of Pasadena has joined hands with the Rotary Club of Madras South, in Chennai, India for a project whereby we funded more than 200 heart surgeries to needy children with congenital heart disease.

We Rotarians embrace this opportunity to do good deeds half way around the world. If you visit [www.caringlittlehearts.com](http://www.caringlittlehearts.com), you can explore a video that tells a compelling story of the challenge to give infants and children in India a chance to live healthy lives. If you cannot give, please share the

website with others on your social media page.

By working together to respond to real community needs, clubs and districts strengthen their global partnerships. The most compelling aspect of participating in the global grants process is the opportunity to make a difference in the world. This year's Global Grant fundraising is only \$17,500 or less than \$88 per surgery.

[DONATE TODAY: https://www.gofundme.com/caring-little-hearts](https://www.gofundme.com/caring-little-hearts)

Monday, February 4, Rotary Readers, 6:15 p.m., *Little Fires Everywhere* by Celeste Ng, at the home of **Kathy and Jim Meagher**, 330 Cordova Street, Rec Room

Monday, February 11, Tyros Luncheon, noon, Athenaeum

## Happy Birthday To These Rotarians!

Cory Brendel, Phyllis Mueller, & Cathy Simms

February 9

## Happy Anniversary To These Rotarians!

|                 |         |          |
|-----------------|---------|----------|
| Sonia Amin      | 2/04/09 | 10 years |
| Ross Jutsum     | 2/06/80 | 39 years |
| Anthony Shapiro | 2/07/18 | 1 year   |

## Potential Member Guests

Mike Sackett, Residential Realtor, Dilbeck Real Estate, guest of **Sheryl Guerrero**

# Upcoming Programs

|             |                      |   |
|-------------|----------------------|---|
| February 13 | David Lockington     | Pasadena Symphony                           |
| February 20 | <b>Scott Jenkins</b> | Chair of the Rose Bowl Management Committee |
| February 27 | Val Zavala           | The Future of Public Media                  |
| March 6     | Dr. Julia Bradsher   | CEO, Huntington Medical Research Institutes |

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

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Visit our website [www.pasadenarotary.com](http://www.pasadenarotary.com)

*See you on Wednesday!*

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