



the CLARifier

CLAREMONT ROTARY NEWSLETTER

SERVICE ABOVE SELF

Claremont Rotary Year 90 | Week 14 | April 5, 2019

Program: Mission of Forever Kids: Case for Character Tony Salerno

Submitted by Buff Wright

Tony Salerno was invited to talk about something really important among many important things. Tony is a founder of Forever Kids, an organization that helps foster kids, currently focused on the San Gabriel Valley. He has produced a number of books and films on character for children and has 8 grammy nominations.

He related a story about a meeting with a group that has given grants for good works for 30 years. One of the principal funders took Tony aside after his presentation and said that for 30 years of people pitching stories, he had no idea that the significant needs of foster kids weren't being addressed in his own back yard.



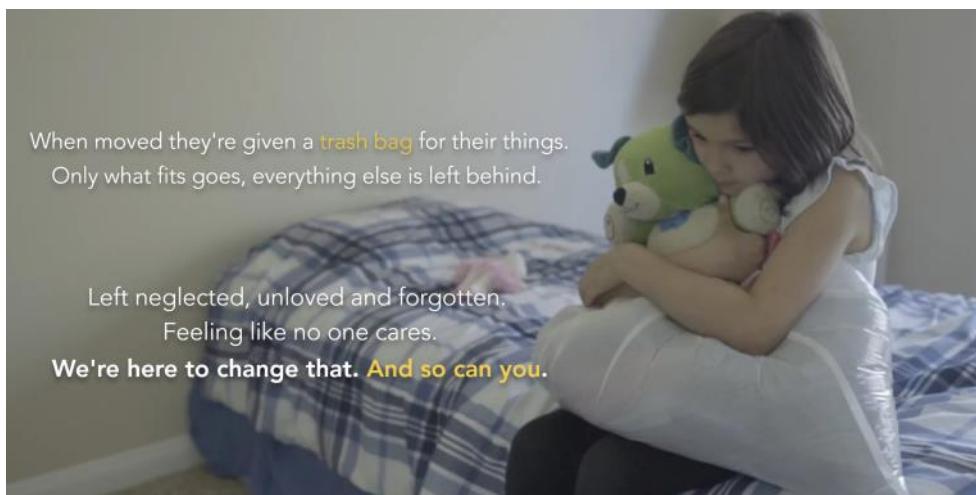
Tony started working with young adults and in projects across the US. About 4 years ago, a Board member talked with him about the problems faced by foster kids. There are about 450,000 foster kids in the US.

Tony shared a film about the Case for Character program that shows the result. ([view it here](#)) Each foster child moves many times; each home has

different rules. Foster children are given little notice of a move and only one trash bag to take their stuff from home to home. Forever Kids decided that giving kids a suitcase would serve a critical need. Inside each case is a collection of character building materials to make a difference in their lives; it's a "case for character."

Several kids were highlighted in the film, telling about how

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Countdown to the
Taste of Claremont

16

DAYS

17

HOURS

28

MINS

29

SECS

April 27, 2019



ROTARY: THE MEETING

submitted by Chris Shaner

President Elect Cameron Troxell opened the meeting in the absence of Ron Coleman, who attended a meeting in Ojai. **SPRING BREAK** (for some)!!

Chris Shaner led *Smile* and *God Bless America*.



WELCOME GUESTS AND VISITING ROTARIAN!

Guest **Ron Aswad** came with his father **Adnan Aswad**.

Speaker **Tony Salerno** and his wife **Kathy** were guests of the Club. Tony has been around the Rotary block before, noting that one club sang a song that he recalls was "Have patience, have patience." While there's no evidence of that song online, we found a trailer for a film "Two Drops of Patience" detailing Rotarian Patience Asimwe's travels to Uganda to deliver polio vaccine. [video](#)

Visiting Rotarian Roger Gutierrez, Azusa Rotary and former Assistant Governor of CA East of District 5300.



Jeff Bonhus serves as cashier with Pat Hauducoeur watching

ANNOUNCEMENTS

President Elect Cameron Troxell announced that on April 1, **PDG Jerry Tambe** celebrated 43 years in Rotary!! We'd have patted him on the back if he had attended. Cameron prompted others with long service who WERE there, to offer up their service. **Chuck Cable** has been a Rotarian for 42 years, and soon 43. **Chuck Carpenter** has been an active Rotarian for 55 years! Wow!!

The District Conference is in Anaheim on the 4th, preceded by the Rotary Assembly and Board Training on May 3rd. All members are welcome to sign up and attend.

Next week will be a presentation from Ophelia's Jump, the location of our Rotary Karaoke night!

There will be no meeting on April 19th (Good Friday) nor April 26th (Taste of Claremont). Enjoy the 19th off, but don't miss the opportunity to help out with the Taste on April 26, 27, and 28. Watch your email for a sign up sheet from **Anita Hughes**.

Cameron gave thanks to **John Howland** for his support of the Hope Partners food donations on the first meeting of each month.

20th Annual Taste of Claremont Countdown

Cameron has postcards and yard signs for THE TASTE of CLAREMONT, and a new edition of posters and flyers listing the most current sponsors. If you distributed posters earlier, please replace them with the new ones to give all our sponsors recognition! Sell tickets! [They're available online](#) and from **Brett O'Connor**.

Cameron noted that there will be a water station to reduce use of plastic bottles this year. Resusable steel Rotary water bottles will be sold at club meetings and the Taste at cost -- only \$10. This writer bought one, and is using it!!

Inspiration for the day: **Success**

To laugh often and much; to win the respect of intelligent people and affection of children; to earn the appreciation of honest critics and endure the betrayal of false friends; to appreciate beauty; to find the best in others; to leave the world a bit better, whether by a healthy child, a garden patch or a redeemed social condition; to know even one life has breathed easier because you have lived. This is to have succeeded.

John Howland quoting Ralph Waldo Emerson



Case for Character, continued

they were moved every 6-8 months and were given 2 days notice of a move and a trash bag to hold any of their belongings that fit. It's heartbreaking. The suitcases provided by this program give kids something of their own that they can lock securely, providing value and dignity, letting them know that one person cares about them independent of their transient home. Any donation to the program goes into purchase of a bag, which they buy for \$70 (a \$150 value), along with character-building materials inside.

After the film, Tony continued that he understands that not all can provide a home for a foster child. It is apparent that those who do are not always up to the task. He asked one girl who was interviewed in the film, now a sophomore in college, how many times she had moved as a foster child. Her answer? 26 times! This, even though she spent her last 9 years in one home. She and her twin sister, who had been burned seriously by an adult, were in foster care from age 3 months. She and the twin moved separately from home to home and school to school. Two weeks later, Tony offered to help this girl a suitcase and a check for \$200 — she turned the gift down. She walked away but called later after reflection and said it would be the first thing she had ever had of her own, and asked what to do with the check (her first). Tony also talked about meeting football-player sized foster kids. He had brought lavender suitcases for them. They've since changed from lavender to charcoal!

At 18, as foster kids "age out" of the system, they often don't have a good plan for how to manage their emancipation: where to live, how to meet expenses and gain independence. They're essentially given a bus ticket. He reported that consequently 80% of foster kids are impacted by drug and human trafficking -- a national tragedy. This program is just one step toward reform of this bruising system for kids.

In the first 3 years of the organization, funds were raised for about 400-500 suitcases. Last year, they provided cases to 2000 kids. Their territory has expanded to offices in El Monte, Pomona, and Glendora, and they're now moving into San Bernardino County.

In a brief Q&A, **Lark Gerry** told of helping a 16 year old who was fostered in her neighborhood, hiring him for 12 years after his emancipation.

Tony was asked about the frequent moves and the one bag rule. He knows of a kid who had to leave behind her new bike. It's most unkind! The suitcase helps.

Cameron thanked Tony for the remarkable work of ForeverKids. Cameron also recognized **President Ron** and **Yvonne** for raising and adopting two foster kids. Foster children are



Members of the Rotary Club of Azusa helped pack suitcases for Forever Kids in December 2018.

the Zone 8 focus for the DG's project, which **Roger Guitierrez** helped organize. **PE Cameron** ended the meeting by presenting Tony and his wife with a check to be used for Case for Character.



Sargeant Susie Ilsley

It was a fine day for extracting money for the Polio Pig.

Anyone not wearing a pin was fined and if you didn't bring something for Hope Partners, you fed the pig. Unfortunately a big collection!



John Tulac was kicked out of his office because of fumes, and **Nick Quackenbos** was to blame, so he paid the fine.



Frank Hungerford has been at his cabin, though the roads are terrible from recent rain damage. Hwy 243 will take four months to fix; 25-30 dump trucks have been in and out filling holes daily!

Peter Weinberger was fined for not giving Rotary free recognition in the Courier. We pay for ads, but we don't get free stories! He agreed!

In the tradition of **President Ron's** presidential jokes, **PE Cameron** offered his own: What does a clock do when it's hungry? *It goes back 4 seconds!*



Jerry G. reacts to PE Cameron's joke.





Ron Coleman

Claremont Rotary
President

2018-2019



BE THE INSPIRATION

UPCOMING PROGRAMS & EVENTS

April 12	When Ophelia Says Jump
April 19 & 26	Dark for Easter and Taste of Claremont (Apr. 27th)
April 27 eve	A TASTE OF CLAREMONT!
May 3	tbd
May 3-4	District Assembly and Conference in Anaheim

Photo of the Week



Photo by Peter Weinberger

I went to a
meeting in Ojai...
no joke!



OINK!



Bacon Bits

Let's fill up the pig!

**Sergeants' committee
gathers before each
meeting at 11:30 AM in
the Orchard Lounge at
the DoubleTree Hotel
and anyone
with information to
share is welcome!!**

Clarifier Committee

Mike DeWees, co-editor
Lark Gerry
Bobby Hyde
Dan Kentner
Jim Lehman
Steve Schenck
Chris Shaner
Harry Sparrow
Peter Weinberger
Buff Wright, *editor*

Website

Information about the club and back editions of this newsletter are always available on DACdb and www.claremontRotary.org

Join us on Facebook:

www.facebook.com/RotaryofClaremont

Taste of Claremont

tasteofclaremont.org/

April - May Birthdays

Pete Robertson 4-21
Suzanne Christian 4-28
Sylvia Whitlock 4-28
Lyn Childress 5-16
Bill McAllister 5-18
Frank Bedoya 5-19
Chris Shaner 5-20
Bob Hauducoeur 5-26 John Regan 5-31



Notes: Chris Shaner (meeting), Buff Wright (program). Photos: Peter Weinberger
The Claremont Rotary Club meets at the Claremont DoubleTree on Foothill at 12:10pm