
Rotary

Club of Pasadena, CA



SPOKES NEWSLETTER

DISTRICT 5300 * Rotary Club 794 * April 11, 2025 * #01-012

www.pasadenarotary.com

Zoot Velasco

"120 Years of Rotary. Unabridged!"

INTRODUCER: Frank Fish



Zoot Velasco was burned in a house fire at 10 days old and spent his first five years in a hospital. He has overcome an orthopedic disability, childhood trauma, and homelessness. Velasco worked twelve years as a professional breakdancer with Michael Jackson and Prince, as a screen actor with James Cameron, and as an arts educator (former Pasadena Schools Artist in Residence) while touring internationally.

In 1994, he led an award-winning prison arts program. In 2000, as LA Cultural Affairs Arts Director for the Harbor, he built four new cultural centers, managed six partnered art centers, and produced four festivals.

Fullerton's historic Muckenthaler Cultural Center was close to bankruptcy in 2007 when Zoot grew its program, audience, and endowment by 400%, all this during the Great Recession and against the trend for arts organizations at that time.

This success led to an MBA, authoring two books on nonprofit leadership, and the leadership of the Gianneschi Center for Nonprofit Research at Cal State Fullerton. He has taught and trained leaders at the Center, at Cal Poly Pomona, and at Fullerton College. As a consultant and interim CEO, he routinely doubled budgets, pulling six organizations from closure to success while raising over \$42M. Today, he is the Interim Executive Director of Pasadena Heritage.

Zoot is the Past President of the Fullerton Rotary Club, a member of the Altadena Rotary Club, on Altadena Rotary's Fire Recovery committee, a RYLA speaker, a past emcee of PETS, and the new Membership Director for District 5300, having brought 30 new members into Rotary.

WEDNESDAY – APRIL 16, 2025
UNIVERSITY CLUB OF PASADENA - 12:00 pm
175 N. Oakland Ave, Pasadena 91101
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

Reception: Alan Schier & Mike Bernard
Song Leader: Eric Olson
Lunchtime Pianist: Ann Louise Christensen
Inspiration: Frank Fish
Scout Zone Reporter: Dean Billman
Photographer: PE-E Tammy Silver & Gui Bittencourt
Technical: Frank Fish & Scott Carlson
Sergeant At Arms: Robert Lyons
Non-members are welcome - \$45.00 includes lunch

ZOOM is back and opens at 12:15 pm

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

Simply Stephen Smith's Spokes Speaks



Both Passover and Palm Sunday are deeply meaningful to many people worldwide, and Rotarians, with their commitment to service and community, are in a unique position to help celebrate and support others during these times.

For Palm Sunday (Christian tradition), we should consider volunteering to assist with Palm Sunday services, especially helping elderly or mobility-challenged attendees. Additionally, we could collaborate with local churches to distribute palms and organize community meals or events. Perhaps host a joint service project or community forum with various faith groups around themes of peace, humility, and renewal. Finally, consider assembling and delivering spiritual care packages for those unable to attend services.

For Passover (Jewish tradition), we should consider working with local synagogues or Jewish charities to help provide Kosher for Passover food items to families in need. Organize Matzah drives, as many families cannot afford the extra cost of Passover

food. Partner with a local synagogue or Jewish group to host an interfaith Seder meal. It's a great opportunity to share traditions and deepen understanding. Finally, use the story of the Exodus - central to Passover - to highlight modern issues like human trafficking or refugee support, aligning with Rotary's causes like peacebuilding and conflict prevention.

In conclusion, the 52nd Annual Pasadena Mayor's Interfaith Prayer Breakfast will be held on Thursday, May 1 from 7:30 -9:00 AM at the Pasadena Convention Center. This year's theme will be "Resilient Pasadena: Rebuilding Our Community's Future." My wife and I attended last year for the first time and I must say it was an incredible event and we are looking forward to attending again this year. I sincerely hope other Pasadena Rotarians will support this long-standing tradition and showcase our commitment to Pasadena.

Stephen D. Smith

President 2024 - 2025
Rotary Club of Pasadena
Cell 310.908.1779

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

BUFFET LUNCH by Chef Tony Lu



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

PHOTOS OF THE WEEK



OUR NEWEST Rotarian is Bridget Lawlor. She is the Preservation Director for Pasadena Heritage, a Corporate Member. Bridget seen with her sponsor: Mic Hansen. WELCOME BRIDGET!



Robert Earnest brought former Rotarian Troy Anderson to the meeting visiting from Bangladesh. Troy is the founder of Speak Up For the Poor - defending and empowering girls in poverty.

ROTARY VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES & EVENTS

PASADENA ROTARY EVENT **DODGERS** vs PITTSBURGH PIRATES GAME

SUNDAY, APRIL 27, 2025 - 1 p.m.
TICKETS: \$64 per Person
PARKING: \$35 Per Vehicle



PLEASE RSVP NOW to armidabaylon@gmail.com
by **Friday, April 11, 2025**

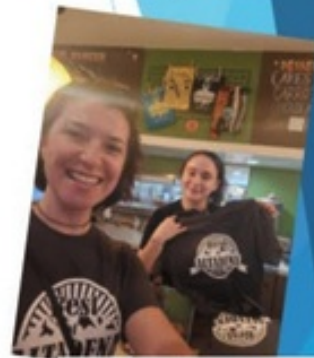
EATON FIRE RELIEF TEE SHIRT PROJECT

Liza Pattison, a passionate advocate for small businesses, has launched a fundraising t-shirt project to help the businesses devastated by the Eaton Fires in Altadena: The Best of Altadena.

The project, backed by **Pasadena Rotary** and Pat Pattison's Best of California TV show, aims to raise awareness and generate financial support for the small businesses completely lost to the fires. The shirts, featuring Altadena's view of the San Gabriel foothills, are available for purchase online (bestofcal.tv) and through local retail partners. The shirts feature the institutions: The Bunny Museum, Fox's Restaurant, Freddy's Antiques, June Bug Tattoo, and St. Marks School/Church. Also order from Freddy's Antiques Instagram at

<https://www.instagram.com/freddysantiques?igsh=NTc4MTlwNjQ2YQ==>

Best of Altadena T-shirt project Happy beneficiaries are selling

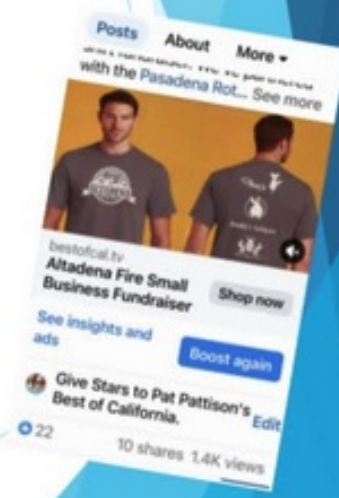
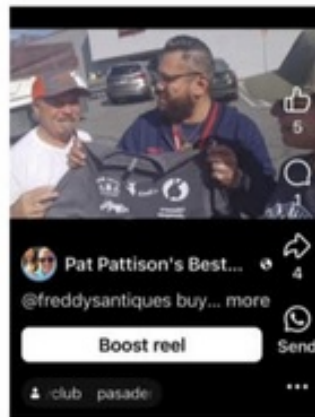
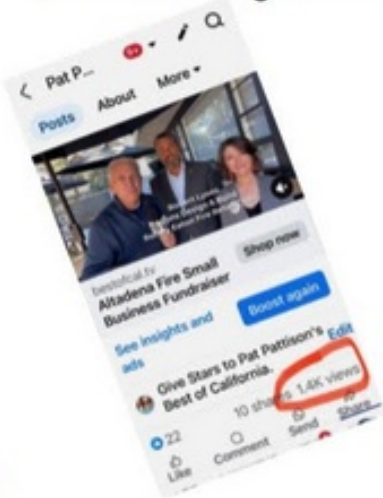


Where you can buy:
Instagram: [freddysantiques](#)
In-person/retail:
Cindy's Coffee shop Eagle Rock (Fox's owner)

June Bug Tattoo Eagle Rock new location
The Bunny Museum (not up yet)
And online e-store:
www.bestofcal.tv



How you can help:
Reshare/ post on your social media
Facebook & Instagram: "Pat Pattison's Best of California"
@bestofca tag #Pasadenarotaryclub



Seeking DIAD Volunteers; **"Club Service Project at Elizabeth House"**

Help us sort job interview clothing for women in need.

Date & Time:

Thursday 4/17/25 9am to Noon.

Place: Elizabeth House, 559 N. El Molino Ave, Pasadena

For more info, Email our DIAD Chair at:
David_McAlexander@Onebox.com"

Volunteer to help staff the 2025 Pasadena Showcase House for the Arts!

Enjoy this beautifully decorated house, support Showcase's mission to fundraise for the arts, and earn donations for our club in the process. For every shift completed by one of our members, Pasadena Rotary will receive \$50.



KEY DETAILS

- Shifts are 3 and 1/2 hours long (inside or outside) and you must stand the whole time (other than during a 15 minute break for water/snacks/bathroom).
- Parking for volunteers is at Santa Anita Park with shuttles to and from the house. If you can't get dropped off and picked up in the blocks surrounding the Showcase House, you should also factor in around 40 minutes to an hour for that process **each way**.
- Your job will be to greet guests, answer basic questions, and direct traffic through the house.
- If you complete TWO separate shifts, you will receive a **free ticket** to tour the Showcase House any day after 1:30 p.m.

If you'd like to volunteer, let our coordinator, Amanda Pumilia, know which days you're available for and which shifts you'd prefer. She will schedule your shift(s) and send a confirmation with the date and time.

Email: apumilia@yahoo.com or text: (818) 693-0331

Shifts are available on Tuesdays - Sundays from April 20th to May 18th

9:00 - 12:30

12:15 - 4:00

3:45 - 7:00

Join Mayor Victor M. Gordo, Community Members, Pasadena Residents, Civic, Business, Student, and Educational Leaders, and the Interfaith Community

52ND ANNUAL PASADENA MAYOR'S

Interfaith Prayer Breakfast

HOSTED BY FRIENDS IN DEED

THURSDAY

May 1

7:30-9:00 AM

PASADENA CONVENTION CENTER | DOORS OPEN AT 6:45 AM

Resilient Pasadena: Rebuilding our Community's Future

JOIN THE ROTARY TABLE AT THE MAYOR'S BREAKFAST

Breakfast Chair: George Falardeau

Cost of Ticket: \$45.00

RSVP: Committee Member Wendy Anderson

office@pasadenarotary.com



**MT. WILSON
OBSERVATORY
STAR GAZING
EXCURSION REDUX!
Friday, May 9th**

**\$80 for telescope
observation + dinner/drinks
or \$50 for observation only**

Pasadena Rotary will be making its second attempt at going up to Mt. Wilson on Friday, May 9th to experience stars, planets and the cosmos through the 60" telescope. Through the Mount Wilson Institute guides, each attendee will look several times through the eyepiece on the telescope at chosen celestial targets.

But capacity of the tour is limited to 25 people so this is a "First RSVP-First Twenty-Five" Rotarians and guests are in!

There are two sign-up options—one is the observation session plus dinner and drinks or just the observation session. More details will follow regarding the timing and location of the dinner and possible ride sharing. The evening should go to

around 10:00 PM although you can leave early if needed.

RSVP to Rob Fisher at rob@fbrg.agency or sign up at a Rotary meeting to see the stars!



Rotary Club of Pasadena Community Paul Harris Fellow Award Nomination Form

Each year the Awards Committee selects a recipient for the Community Paul Harris Fellow Award. This individual shall be from within the Pasadena community and not a current member of Pasadena Rotary. Organizations, groups and clubs are not eligible to receive the award. Nominees should exemplify the qualities and ideals of Rotary and “Service Above Self,” be active in community affairs, and be known in the business community as one who follows the “Four-Way Test.” This year, we wish to highlight those nominees that have been engaged in Eaton Canyon Fire community relief and assistance efforts.

The Rotary Club of Pasadena will honor our award recipient with a Paul Harris Fellow recognition. Our recipient will be honored at the weekly meeting of the Rotary Club of Pasadena on Wednesday, June 4, 2025.

To nominate someone email Co-chair Catherine Hany - chhany@pacbell.net or Co-chair Mike Farrand at mjfarrand@yahoo.com for a Nomination Form. There will be Nomination Forms available at the 4/16/25 meeting.



THE SCOOT ZONE By Staff Reporter Scott Carlson Photographers: PP Ken Joe & Gui Bittencourt

President Stephen Smith called the meeting to order at 12:30 p.m.

PP Phil Miles, with **Don Andrues** on guitar, led us in singing a spirited version of “Money” by the Beatles, because that is, after all, what we want, with the Four Way Test Singers and then led us in the Pledge of Allegiance.

Patrick Dinan provided the inspiration, reading an inspiring quote from Cosmic Insignificance Theory.

President Stephen then presided over the induction of new member **Bridget Lawlor** with Pasadena Heritage. **Mic Hansen** introduced **Bridget**, letting us know that she is the Preservation Director of Pasadena Heritage and will be stellar addition to our club.



President Stephen next called for guests to be introduced:

- **Robert Earnest** introduced Former Rotarian **Troy Anderson**, who works in empowering young women living in poverty.
- **Deborah Lewis** introduced **Stanley Han**, who works at a nearby Pharmacy.
- **Robert Lyons** and **Sandi Mejia** introduced **Joe Ray Mendoza** and **Pam Mendoza**. **Joe** is the President of the Board of Directors of the LA County Parks and Recreation Foundation which will be partnering with us on a TBA project.
- **Armida Baylon** introduced potential member **Mason Pechy**, an IT Consultant.
- **Howard Raff** introduced Potential Members **Ada Peng**, a real estate financing consultant, and **John Tran**, who operates a preschool and is a real estate investor.
- And last but not least, **Bob Risley** introduced his lovely, better half, **Rosemary**.

President Stephen then called up **Desiree Alvarado** and **Dede Venkat** to discuss this year's **RYLA** weekend. They played a video in the background while letting us know that the event was very successful. They awarded Certificates for Outstanding Participation in RYLA to Giselle Leyva, Sabrina Ramirez, and Hazel Vukojevich, 3 Pasadena area high school students, who each briefly addressed us and let us know how much they enjoyed the weekend. **Dede** and **Desiree** encouraged us to attend RYLA as facilitators next year so that we could enjoy the experience too!



RYLA- L2R: Co-chair Desiree Alvarado, Giselle Leyva, Sabrina Ramirez, Hazel Vukojevich, President Stephen, Co-chair Dede Venkat

Next, **President Stephen** asked for announcements.

- **President Stephen** (i) gauged our interest in having another pickleball event, which was surprisingly, at least to this writer, not enthusiastically endorsed; (ii) encouraged us to sign up for the May 9th rescheduled trip to the Mt. Wilson Observatory, and (iii) let us know we will have Speed Rotary at our next meeting.
- **David McAlexander** told us that the next Done in a Day service project will be at Elizabeth House but that there are no sign up sheets because the staffing is almost full. Please contact David if you want to participate.
- **Robert Lyons** announced that our Eaton Fire Committee partnered with Best of Cal TV to produce T-shirts for sale for the benefit of impacted businesses. You are encouraged to buy the T shirts directly from an impacted business. They are also available online from Best of Cal TV. [See LINKS above to order.](#)

President Stephen then asked **Tammy Silver** to come to the podium and introduce our speaker.

Tammy informed us that our speaker, Dr. Robert Kleinhenz, is an economist who grew up in Lorraine, Ohio, obtained his BA in Economics from Michigan, and then his Master's and PhD degrees from USC.



Dr. Kleinhenz then took the mic and gave as an interesting statistical outlook on the economy, titled "Uncertainty in the 2025 Economic Outlook." His professional focus is on urban and regional economics.

He started with an overview of the U.S. economy's "vital signs" – the labor market is the pulse, the GDP is the heartbeat and inflation is the BP.

In the labor market, unemployment was 4% through March 25, 2025, which is a good number.



GDP grew 2.2% last year. It will probably be less this year given current events.

Inflation rate was 2.5% last year, which is good. We need some inflation for the economy to grow. The Fed aims for an annual increase of 2%, which is difficult to achieve.

In addition, while interest rates are up over their historic lows several years ago, they remain reasonable in contrast to the extremely high rates of the late 70s and the 80s.

Dr. Kleinhenz advised that the statistics are not so good for our state economy. Our recent job growth has been weak and many industries are lagging behind in growth. He also advised that our LA County economy is also weak right

now.

Dr. Kleinhenz concluded by letting us know that, overall, the US economy has been very resilient and that he is optimistic that it will adapt to current turbulent events and continue to grow. He also advised that he will make his slides available to us. They contain far more information than can be readily presented in this space.

**** For a copy of Dr. Kleinhenz's slide show access via Tammy Silver's website at <https://www.tammysilver4pcc.com/newsandresources>.**

President Stephen then adjourned the meeting.



L2R: Robert Kleinhenz, Tammy Silver, Troy Anderson, Robert Earnest, President Stephen, Young Lee Hertig, Fred Findley, Wende Lee, Marsha Rood

HAPPY BIRTHDAY!!

Alex Boekelheide	April 12
Diana Sedenquist	April 15

HAPPY ROTAVERSARY

Kevin Moore	4/15/15	10 Years
-------------	---------	----------

UPCOMING PROGRAMS

April 23, 2025 - Liza & Pat Pattison, Best of California Show - Top 10 Hidden Gems for Summer Travel

April 30, 2025 - Teachers of Excellence Program

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

Weekly Live Wednesday Meeting by RSVP
University Club Pasadena, 175 N. Oakland Ave.

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

Scout Zone Reporters: Mary Lou Byrne & Dean Billman

Photographers: Hans Rosenberger, Hillary Schenk,
Tammy Silver, Ken Joe, Claudia Ponce de Leon, Mike
Bernard, Dede Venkat & Gui Bittencourt.

Proofers: Kathy Meagher & Amanda Pumilia

Making Magic

by doing Service

PROMOTING PEACE FIGHTING DISEASE

PROVIDING CLEAN WATER

SAVING MOTHERS AND CHILDREN

GROWING LOCAL ECONOMIES SUPPORTING EDUCATION

PROTECTING THE ENVIRONMENT.



Pasadena Rotary Club
Stephen Smith, President 2024-25

**ROTARY CLUB OF PASADENA 2023-2024 BOARD OF DIRECTORS
MEETS the 3rd Thursday of every month at 5pm - University Club of Pasadena**

PRESIDENT: Stephen Smith

PRESIDENT ELECT: Hillary Schenk

IMMEDIATE PAST PRESIDENT: Justene Adamec

SECRETARY: Wende Lee

TREASURER: Tony Phillips

**CLUB DIRECTORS: Don Andruess, George Falardeau, Frank Fish, Sandy Goodenough,
J.P. Harris, Debi Kroman, Robert Lyons, David McAlexander, Claudia Ponce de Leon, Nevino
Rocco, Tammy Silver, (President Elect Elect), 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

[Unsubscribe](#) | [Update Profile](#) | [Constant Contact Data Notice](#)



Try email marketing for free today!