
Rotary

Club of Pasadena, CA



SPOKES NEWSLETTER

DISTRICT 5300 * Rotary Club 794 * March 21, 2025 * #01-009

www.pasadenarotary.com

ALEX SANTAMARIA

President/CEO, Southern CA Public Radio
"Strengthening Local Journalism in Uncertain Times"

INTRODUCER: Dr. Jose Gomez



Alejandra Santamaria is the President and CEO of Southern California Public Radio. She most recently served as the Interim President, General Manager and Vice President, Director of Sales for Univision Los Angeles, part of TelevisaUnivision, the leading Hispanic media company in the U.S. In this role, Santamaria ran sales and operations for Univision's flagship local television station KMEX, UniMas KFTR, KLVE-FM, KSCA-FM, KRCD/V-FM and KTNQ-AM radio stations and a suite of digital properties in the Los Angeles market.

Santamaria has three decades of experience in the media industry. She also served as the President and General Manager of Univision

Arizona where she led all station operations, sales initiatives and digital marketing solutions for the company's local TV, radio and digital properties based in Phoenix for the entire state of Arizona.

Prior to that, Santamaria served in various roles at Univision Los Angeles, including director of local sales and senior account executive. Santamaria began her media career at Univision as an intern before being hired as a research analyst.

Santamaria is a founding member of Univision's Women's Leadership Council, an employee resource group designed to prepare the next generation of women leaders. She most recently served on the boards of the Los Angeles Area Chamber of Commerce and

the L.A. County Economic Development Corporation.

Santamaria holds a Bachelor of Arts degree with honors from Loyola Marymount University where she majored in Communications and minored in Business.

WEDNESDAY – MARCH 26, 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: Mary Lou Byrne
Inspiration: Stewart Rydman Espinosa
Scout Zone Reporter: Mary Lou Byrne
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



Yesterday, March 20th, was the first day of Spring, which is also known as the vernal equinox. The first day of Spring is determined by where the Earth is in its orbit around the Sun.

On this day, the Earth's axis is not tilted toward or away from the sun. The earth's axis is tilted in such a way that the sun shines directly on the equator, thus creating a balanced division of day and night.

Once the Earth hits its vernal equinox, the Northern Hemisphere moves into spring and the Southern Hemisphere moves into fall. The Earth sits at 23.5 degrees on its axis, which is also what causes the seasons.

The vernal equinox is celebrated in a variety of ways around the world. In Japan, the

vernal equinox, or Shun-bun no Hi, is a public holiday to show appreciation for nature and welcome the start of the cherry blossom season. In addition, the country also recognizes a 7-day period called Higan, during which people pay respects to their ancestors.

In Mexico, one of the traditions is to visit the Pyramid of the Sun in Teotihuacan. Nowruz, meaning "new day", is a new year and spring equinox celebration in Iran and other countries in Central Asia. It is an ancient celebration of life, rebirth, and the triumph of light over darkness.

In the event anyone is wondering, there are 92 days in Spring as the summer solstice begins on Friday, June 20, 2025. The vernal equinox is also considered the beginning of the zodiac year in astrology. It's when the Sun enters Aries, the first sign of the zodiac, symbolizing new beginnings, action, and energy.

The first day of spring is a powerful symbol of change and optimism, marking the end of winter's dormancy and the start of a vibrant, life-filled season. As Pasadena Rotarians, let's celebrate this new season by energizing ourselves and do our best to help others less fortunate than us.

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

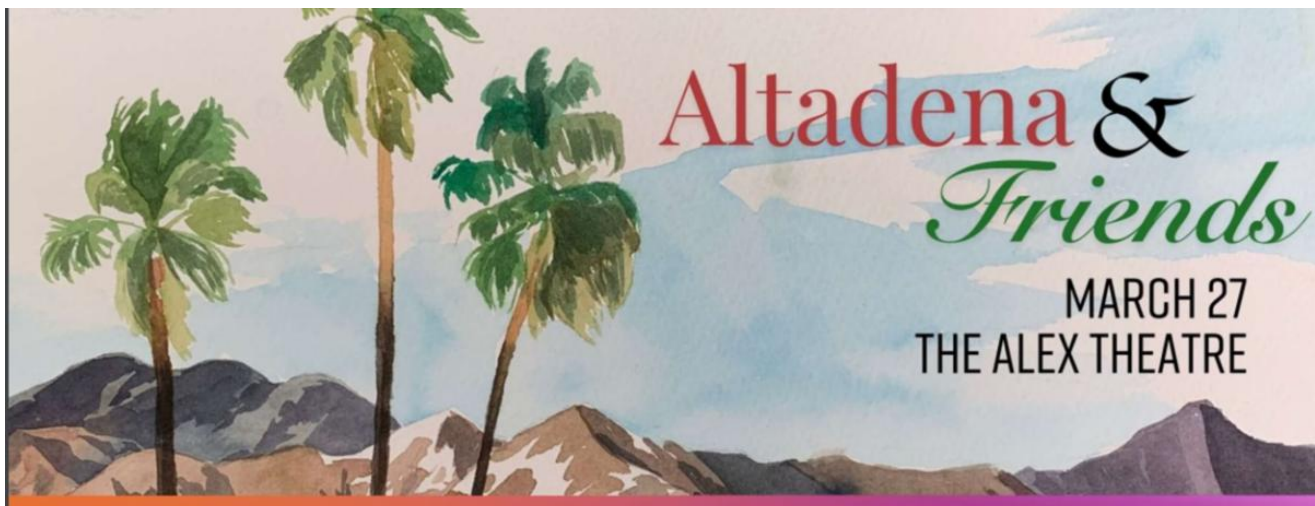


**CLICK HERE TO
RSVP TODAY**

PHOTO OF THE WEEK
The Music Men - Eric Olson & Don Andruess



ROTARY VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES & EVENTS



Altadena & Friends Fire Relief Concert

Join us at the Alex Theatre on Thursday, March 27, for a 90-minute variety show featuring an extraordinary lineup of artists from the affected areas.

Host a LiveStream party with your club!

Details coming soon

TICKETS ON SALE NOW!

Rotary 
Club of Altadena

 PASADENA
HERITAGE
PRESERVATION | ADVOCACY | EDUCATION



Rotary 
District 5300

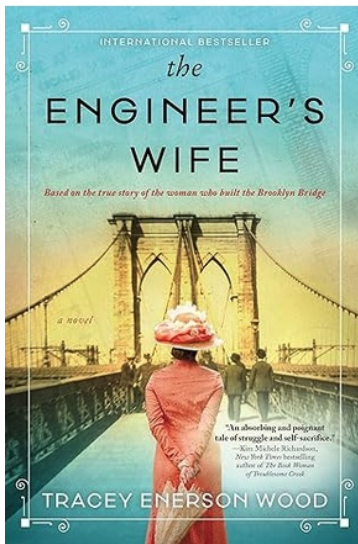
ROTARY READERS

Rotary Readers will meet at 6 pm on April 7th

Judy Taylor will lead us in the discussion of
The Engineer's Wife by Tracey Enerson Wood.

Please RSVP to Phyllis Specht and Jan Sanders as
Cathy will be out of town.

Phyllis may be reached via email
at chesterspecht@icloud.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



The Scoot Zone

By Staff Reporter Dean Billman
Photographers: PP Ken Joe & Gui Bittencourt

Our own Pasadena Rotary Past President **Mary Lou Byrne** gave an engaging presentation on her service as an LA Superior Court Commissioner (“same as a judge but paid 15% less for doing the exact same job”). Her main takeaway on hearing over ten years of Traffic Court is “when you get pulled over by a police officer, keep your mouth shut” – read on if you want to know more about Traffic Court FAQ’s.

Many in the audience were drafted by song meister **Don Andrues** into the newly expanded Rotary Four-Way Test Singers, so when **President Stephen Smith** called the meeting to order at 12:30pm with the clang of the big brass Rotary Bell, a large circle of singers was ready to go with a legally inspired song (according to song leader **Eric Olson**), *I Fought the Law*, by Sonny Curtis of the Crickets – the audience followed the singers as we all happily sang about crime and punishment, the Rotary way!

Our inspiration by “Wonderful **David McAlexander**” turned out to be, in David’s own words, not so wonderful – Steven Crane (of the Red Badge of Courage fame) on a man consumed with self-pity, eating his own heart in the desert – since David is a lawyer by degree, maybe this is his own version of a client who will not take good advice?



PHOTO: Eric Olson & the Four Way Test Singers: Don Andrues, Mike Bernard, Debi Kroman, Dean Billman, Deb Raupp, George Falardeau, Phyllis Currie, Phil Miles, Allison Burgos, John McDannel, Gary Kearney and Robert Steel

Guests:

- **PP Howard Raff** introduced Robert Steel, a visiting Rotarian from St. Martin, of the British West Indies – he exchanged Rotary Club flags.
- **Mike Bernard** welcomed Richard Henderson, a retired attorney who is interested in joining our club.

Announcement:

- **President Stephen Smith** gave a summary of our Day of Service at the Altadena Fire Relief Effort last Saturday; Pasadena Rotarians attending were **President Stephen, Dean Billman, and PP Phil Miles**, and Rotary members of Claremont Sunrise, Altadena, Glendale, and Glendora clubs were also present. We gave away over 900 air purifiers, hundreds of bags of fruit and vegetables, and new donated clothes to over 700 cars of registered fire victims. **Dean Billman** got very sunburned.

- Union Station Homeless Services, a Rotary corporate member, will have their annual fundraiser at the Rose Bowl on April 6th, taking the place of their Masters of Taste event – our club is encouraged to sign up to volunteer.
- FIRE RELIEF CONCERT AT THE ALEX THEATER MARCH 27TH; Altadena & Friends is throwing an Altadena Fire Relief fundraiser at the Alex Theater, and the Altadena Rotary club is one of the organizers – many of the musicians who lost their homes will be

performing, including one of our past Dan Stover violin judges, Ms. Irina Voloshina. They encourage us to buy tickets and support them. (see above information)

- **PE Hillary Schenk** promised to buy dinner for all Pasadena Rotarians who join her at the Rotary International Convention in Calgary, Canada on June 21-25. Many of our club members have attended in the past and can share wonderful stories of the event in the host country.
- **Mike Bernard** (chair of Dan Stover Music Contest Committee) announced the Dan Stover Regional Finals at the Pasadena Salvation Tabernacle on March 27th and encouraged our membership to attend.
- Visiting Rotarian Robert Steel, from the Rotary club on St. Martin, and a summer resident of Wyoming, gave a Polio Pig announcement. He is working in Altadena representing a company which makes fire-proof and earthquake-proof building materials and has a business partnership with a former LA Fire chief. He is interested in joining our club!
- **Sandy Goodenough** (co-chair) reported on our club's Global Grants Project, *Speak Up for the Poor*, a Pasadena Rotarian's project in Bangladesh, helping young women avoid becoming child brides through school sponsorships – we sponsored books and school supplies, helping many become nurses and teachers. (See photos below)



Gary Kearney introduced our speaker today, his spouse PP **Mary Lou Byrne**, as an accomplished retired jurist, but also as someone who was born in El Centro, California's desert, without knowing what a forest tree or snow looked like. But instead of eating her own heart, she followed it to an early entertainment career; however, since she was mis-cast in the school exam play and bombed out, she attended Pepperdine business school, took a business law class, and decided then and there to become a lawyer.



Her early legal career, after law school and working at JPL for five years (putting herself through night classes), was working for a large and middle-sized law firm, finally making partner. She spent years driving downtown every day working as a lawyer while raising a family (Culture Alert: "Young people! – Back in the day we got into our cars, drove to offices where we got work done with other people, and we used to dress up for work"). We marveled how times have changed.

All this led to a coveted appointment to become an LA Superior Court Commissioner, initially handling small



claims, rent evictions (called "unlawful detainers"), criminal and family cases. She spent the last ten years handling traffic court from all the jurisdictions north of the 10, west of the 605, south of La Canada, and east of the 134/210 interchange.

Then Mary Lou put on her figurative robe and proceeded to give us hard-won advice on how to work with the legal system that many of us may eventually interface with: A Traffic Infraction. She asked the audience how many of us had appeared before her, and no one raised their hand – but several volunteered their children had.

As she said, "Criminal court is where bad people are on their best behavior; Family court is where the best people show bad behavior. And traffic court is regular people mostly on their regular behavior."

Her most urgent request to begin her presentation must have been a real pet peeve of hers: "When you get a fix-it ticket, you need to go back to court to get it signed off!" She added that it must be signed by a police station, many which charge a fee – the CHP station will do it for free.

She proceeded to then give us Traffic Court FAQ's:

1. Keep your mouth shut!
2. Don't engage.
3. The officer must tell you why he/she pulled you over.
4. Everything you say is written on the back of the ticket; you will be quoted in court.
5. Don't be afraid to sign the ticket.
6. "Signing DOES NOT admit guilt."
7. You must sign it - or go directly to jail.
8. "Don't be a jerk."
9. Mark the "respond by" date in your calendar!
10. Read the whole ticket, especially what you are charged with. All the statutes are online – look it up!

Easiest Options:

1. Pay the ticket (and go to traffic school)
2. Hire a lawyer and let them worry about it (costs between \$100-200) (She then showed a picture of happy defense lawyers)

If you want to play the odds:

1. Appear in court and plead not guilty.
2. Consider Trial by Declaration
3. Don't copy a bunch of stuff from the internet.

Day of Trial:

1. If officer doesn't show up, case dismissed. You win!
2. If officer shows and you think you're guilty, change plea and ask for traffic school.
3. See if the officer is willing to amend to a non-point violation (really long odds).

If all else fails and you go to trial:

1. Be familiar with the statute you're charged with violating!
2. LISTEN TO THE OFFICER'S TESTIMONY and move to dismiss if appropriate.

If you remember nothing else from today:

1. Be courteous to everyone, especially court staff.

2. Keep your mouth shut and if you must open it, wait your turn and be sure to tell the truth.
3. Don't be this guy: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=0DtNlc7YpFI>

It was a near thing, but Mary Lou finished at 1:29 and President Stephen had time to present her with her magic Rotary mug and announce next week's program before adjourning the meeting and sending us on our way.



L2R: Pat Wright, Russ Guiney, Gary Kearney, Bob Risley, PP Mary Lou Byrne, President Stephen, Rob Fisher, Debi Kroman, J.P. Harris

HAPPY BIRTHDAY!!

Cyrus Afshin	March 21
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HAPPY ROTAVERSARY

Catherine Hany	3/27/02	23 Years
Shel Capeloto	3/27/24	1 Year - Honorary Past President 2016

UPCOMING PROGRAMS

April 2, 2025 - Ed Shorer, Slot Car Racing - Back to Being a Kid: How Slot Car Racing Brings Happiness

April 9, 2025 - Robert Kleinhertz, Kleinhertz Economics - The Economy of the San Gabriel Valley, What to Expect

April 16, 2025 - Zoot Velasco - Rotary/Pasadena Heritage - 120 Years of Rotary, Unabridged

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

April 30, 2025 - Teachers of Excellence Program

May 7, 2025 - Sara Safari, Climb Your Everest

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**

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

Proofers: Kathy Meagher & Amanda Pumilia

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PROVIDING CLEAN WATER

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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

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