



**'SPARKS' OFF THE ROTARY WHEEL**  
*An Award-Winning Newsletter*

**The Rotary Club of Altadena meets Thursdays at noon  
 at the Altadena Town and Country Club**

**Rotary Club of Altadena - #772**  
 Chartered: February 14, 1949, P.O. Box 414, Altadena, CA 91003  
 RI Pres: Stephanie Urchick, Dist. 5300 Gov: Michael Driebe

**THIS WEEK: DR. JESSICA PEREZ DEL TORO**

Executive Director, Partnership for Success  
 Faculty - Upper School Spanish, Westridge School  
**Altadena Town and Country Club, Thursday at noon**  
 Speaker Chair: Brad Roeber



**SEPTEMBER 26, 2024**  
**SEPTEMBER IS: Basic Education  
 and Literacy Month**



Dr. Jessica Pérez del Toro is an accomplished educator and leader with a strong commitment to fostering academic and personal growth in students. She currently serves as the Executive Director of Partnership for Success, a program dedicated to helping selected Pasadena Unified School District (PUSD) students realize their full potential through community, collaboration, and confidence.

Dr. Pérez del Toro is also a faculty member at Westridge School, where she teaches Upper School Spanish and Latin American history.

A proud graduate of PUSD, Dr. Pérez del Toro has dedicated her career to educational equity and access, drawing on her own experiences as both a student and teacher in the district. She holds a B.A. in History and Education Studies from the University of California, Los Angeles, and teaching credentials from California State University, Los Angeles. Her advanced

**Officers**

**President: Maricela Viramontes**  
**Vice President: Dawn Digrius Smith**  
**President Elect: Brad Roeber**

**Treasurer: Mike Noll**  
**Bus: 626-657-2287**  
**Secretary: James Gorton**  
**Bus: 626-793-6215**

**Directors**

**Craig Cox**  
**Maria Perez-Arton**  
**Mark Mariscal**  
**Sarah O'Brien**  
**Lisa Rickard**  
**Doug Colliflower**  
**Brad Roeber**

**Chairs**

**Executive Club Secretary: Mark Mariscal**  
**Membership: Maria Perez-Arton  
 & Brad Roeber**  
**Foundation: Steve Kerekes**  
**Service Projects: Mike Zoeller**

**Subcommittees**

**Community Service: Craig Cox**  
**Vocational Service: Steve Kerekes**  
**Youth Contests, Scholarships, Awards: Mike  
 Zoeller**  
**Youth Activities: Tony Hill**  
**International Service: Sarah O'Brien**

studies include an M.A. in Teaching English to Speakers of Other Languages from the University of Southern California, an M.A. in Spanish Language and Culture from the University of Salamanca, Spain, and an Ed.D. in Educational Leadership from the University of California, Los Angeles, where her dissertation focused on diversity, equity, and inclusion in independent schools.

Since 2015, Dr. Pérez del Toro has been a member of the Westridge faculty, where she has taught Spanish at both the Middle and Upper School levels. From 2019 to 2022, she served as the Westridge PFS Site Director, working closely with teachers, students, and families to ensure a meaningful program experience. In 2020, she founded the PFS Mentor Program, designed to provide ongoing support and connections for PUSD students and high school students across Pasadena, creating lasting ties between independent schools and PUSD communities.

In addition to her role as Executive Director, Dr. Pérez del Toro previously served as Dean of Student Voices at Westridge from 2016 to 2019. In this capacity, she collaborated with student leaders to promote initiatives focused on diversity, equity, and inclusion. Her commitment to these values is further reflected in her role as the creator of Westridge's first history elective centered on Latin American studies, which she inaugurated and taught during the 2021-2022 school year.

Prior to her time at Westridge, Dr. Pérez del Toro was a Spanish/English dual language immersion teacher at San Rafael Elementary School, and she has taught students across K-12 levels. Her approach to education is rooted in building leadership capacity, expanding perspectives, and creating engaging and relevant curricula.

Outside of her professional life, Dr. Pérez del Toro enjoys swimming, cycling, running, reading history books, discovering new vegan restaurants, dancing to Spanish music, traveling, and spending time with her family.



<https://www.ecsforseniors.org/montecedro/>

## Altadena Rotary Projects, Volunteer Opportunities and Events Calendar

Craig Cox

Please save the date for the next  
Rotary Community Pancake Breakfast  
- October 5, 2024  
8 -10.30 am.

September 28th: 5-9 pm  
Altadena Library Foundation  
Taste of Dena Event

To register for any event go to DacDB,  
Login, elect the My Club, tab, go the  
the Calendar icon, and go to the date.

**Altadena Grocery Outlet is Proud to Host**

**Semi-Annual Pancake Breakfast**  
Benefits Altadena Mountain Rescue Team (AMRT),  
Christmas Tree Lane Association (CTLA), and Altadena Heritage

 **GROCERY OUTLET**   
Bargain Market

**Saturday, Oct. 5, 2024 • 8:00-10:30 am**

**Here or To-Go Tickets \$5.00**  
Tickets available at Sheriff Station, El Patron  
Restaurant, Grocery Outlet or [altadenarotary.org](http://altadenarotary.org)  
Sheriff Station (626) 798-1131

Donate through  
PayPal or Venmo  
note it is for Pancake  
Breakfast, and tickets \$5  
will be held at door 

Proceeds benefit AMRT, CTLA, and Altadena Heritage | Sponsored By - 



## LAST WEEK: HANS ROSENBERGER

### Altadena Energy and Solar

Speaker Chair: Brad Roeber      Review: Catalina Theodoros



Speaking on Thursday, September 19 was a fellow Rotarian from the Pasadena chapter, Hans Rosenberger of Altadena Energy & Solar. Hans brought the group along on an engaging journey through his path to solar energy and sustainable technologies. Hans began the talk by considering the saying that we are a product of our environment, and thus comes our sense of place and purpose. He grew up in the 1980s, and during

this time period concerns about our environment were taking shape and taking center stage. Ozone depletion and the effects of urban sprawl were glaring, and Hans felt an alarm about these matters, and they eventually guided his academic and career pursuits.

In his years at Penn State, Hans had an interest in physics and electrical engineering. He did lab work measuring temperature and water vapor in the atmosphere. He then began work at the Jet Propulsion Lab (JPL) as a staff engineer, and amongst other work measured ozone in Sweden's high altitudes. This was a very memorable time for him, but eventually Hans decided he wanted to work in energy.

After graduating from the USC School of Business he interned in sustainable energies, including solar wind builds. Some of these wind builds were the first along the Atlantic Coast. Following this venture, Hans went to Germany and worked on energy efficient solutions to buildings from the 1870s, as well as planning for new energy efficient real estate. This all eventually led to the formation of Altadena Energy & Solar. Upon his return to Altadena, he saw the growth in green energy development. In 2009, the company built the first residential and commercial solar projects in Claremont, CA. As the fuel of choice was fast becoming electric, Altadena Energy & Solar found a home in Altadena and focused on the SGV communities, in particular Altadena and Pasadena. His business produced everything from residential backyard solar canopies, to commercial solar parking structures.

There are always many challenges when operating a small business, especially a new one. Hans and his partner focused on quality work and prioritizing the pay and benefits of their employees. The goal was a "growing business to be proud of." As things moved forward and the business continued to grow, Hans would always remember the reason he started this lasting venture – combating global warming. It was his guiding motivation from the beginning and still is. There is a large-scale need and demand for clean energies. California continues to be a leader in clean energy, and solar makes up 30% of the California total



[www.altadenasolar.com](http://www.altadenasolar.com)

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### A Thank You Card From Georgia Rutherford

Since 2017 when our Rotary Club took over the operations of the Summer Concert Series in Farnsworth Park, we have received a hand-written note from Georgia thanking us for the efforts of our volunteers. Her husband, along with Bob Klomburg were involved since day one. Georgia wrote:

*Dear Altadena Rotary Club Members,*

*Just a quick note to tell you how much I enjoyed the summer concerts and that I truly appreciated all the work and effort each of you contributed to another successful year. Looking forward to 2025.*

*Sincerely,*

*Georgia Salazar Rutherford*



To  
Maggie  
Cortez on  
the sad  
passing  
of her  
mother.

electricity generation. Hans referred the club to monitor the California Independent System Operator website for daily statistics of California's renewable energies.

Despite the rapidly rising solar demands, and California's leadership in this area, solar still has catching up to do. Altadena Energy & Solar is committed to keeping pace with rapidly evolving technology while maintaining the quality of their work and focus on the surrounding communities. Hans works toward an environmentally conscious, low-carbon lifestyle, and this really came through in his talk. The Rotary Club thanks Hans for joining us to give his presentation and share this insightful overview of solar as a major utility, and how solar energy will continue to expand in California and beyond.

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An Inspirational Moment  
by Mike Zoeller!



## Your President (and Board) Are Insured!

By President Maricela Viramontes

Most of our club members are not aware that the club, via Rotary International, has different insurance plans to protect us as an entity. Our Board of Directors is covered under a Directors and Officers

plan; our events have a General Liability Coverage Plan. When we hold the Summer Concert Series, we add the LA County Parks as an additional insured entity. I share this so that when it comes time to consider joining our Board of Directors or the Board of the Altadena Rotary Charities (ARC), be assured that Rotary is helping protect us.

I attended the ARC meeting on Thursday afternoon. What an important entity we are all part of! The ARC's only member is the Rotary Club of Altadena. The Board has a fiduciary responsibility to protect the assets that are used by the club for service projects. ARC Treasurer (for more than 25 years), Sue Applegate, presented the Profit and Loss report for the fiscal year ending June 30, 2024.

Last Thursday during the club meeting, I was privileged to join Membership Chair Maria Perez-Arton to present Red Badges to FIVE new members of the club. All came as individuals. Three of the new members are first time members (Linda, Diana, Dennis),



Last Thursday, Mike Zoeller, representing Doug Colliflower (Chair of Summer Concert Series Committee) presented a \$500 check to Captain Jabari Williams for the Altadena Station Fund (pictured above). This gesture was in appreciation of the contributions made by Reserve Deputies and the Station staff in helping make the Concert Series fun and safe for the community. Also attending was Lieutenant Dion Battey.

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Guest of  
Ed  
Jasnow:  
Geoffrey  
James

Jennifer is returning to our club and Elizabeth was a member of the Marina-Venice Club about 10 years ago.

They have all jumped right into serving on various committees that oversee our Club's work and our involvement with the community.

Next Saturday, I will attend the Taste of Dena fundraiser of the Altadena Library Foundation (ALF). The ALF President is our own Mark Mariscal. The ALF did not hold a fundraiser last year due to circumstances beyond their control. Some of our club members are attending, others are volunteering. Thank you to all who are helping support our community gem. We are additionally fortunate that Altadena Library District Director (Nikki Winslow) and Deputy Director (Ashley Watts) are members of our club.

***I look forward to seeing you on Thursday!***



***Rotary Club of Altadena's five new members!***  
*Pictured above (L - R) are Maria (Membership co-Chair) with:*

***Jennifer Hall-Lee***

***Diana Yang***

***Dennis McGinley***

***Elizabeth Brooks***

***Linda Ciarimboli***

*President Maricela*

***WELCOME to ALL!***

## Rotary Monthly Themes

- July - Maternal & Child Health Month
- August - Membership & New Club Development Month
- September - Basic Education & Literacy Month
- October - Economic & Community Development Month
- November - Rotary Foundation Month
- December - Disease Prevention & Treatment Month
- January - Vocational Service Month
- February - Peace and Conflict Prevention Month
- March - Water, Sanitation & Hygiene Month
- April - Environmental Month
- May - Youth Service Month
- June - Fellowship month



## Rotary International Convention 2025

The 2025 ROTARY International Convention will be held in Calgary from June 21 to June 25, 2025.

The event is organized by Rotary International and is expected to draw attendees from more than 100 countries.

For more info and to register:  
<https://convention.rotary.org/en-us/>