



**'SPARKS' OFF THE ROTARY WHEEL**

*An Award-Winning Newsletter*

Edited by Sarah O'Brien

**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



D.Vance Graphics

**JANUARY 9, 2024**

**January is:  
Vocational Service Month**

**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**



**JANUARY 9: CLUB ASSEMBLY**

**Altadena Town and Country Club  
Thursday at noon**

Committee Chairs and others, please plan to update members about  
Projects, Plans and Club Business!

Wishing a very Merry Christmas and Happy Holidays to all!  
See you in 2025!



Guests at last week's meeting.

## LAST WEEK: ZIA SAYLOR

### Rotary Global Scholar Recipient and Fulbright Scholar

Speaker Chair: Steve Kerekes Review: Dawn Digrius Smith



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



This past Thursday, our last meeting of the year, we welcomed Zia Saylor, a resident of Pasadena, and graduate of Williams College, who is currently studying at the University of Bristol (UK), in the area of Social Policy. Zia was the recipient of a Global Scholarship to support her Public Policy MSc, but had to turn it down because she had earned a Fulbright Scholarship for 2023-2024 as well, and was not able to accept both.

However, due to the hard work of Rotary, Zia was able to keep the Global Scholarship and delay its distribution until after she completed her Fulbright. Zia's local sponsors are the Rotary Club of Bristol. Laurie Haynes, the Club's President last year, assisted with the arrangements. During her tenure at Bristol in Spring 2024, Zia gave what Laurie described as an "impressive talk" to their club and she maintains contact with the student liaison club members.

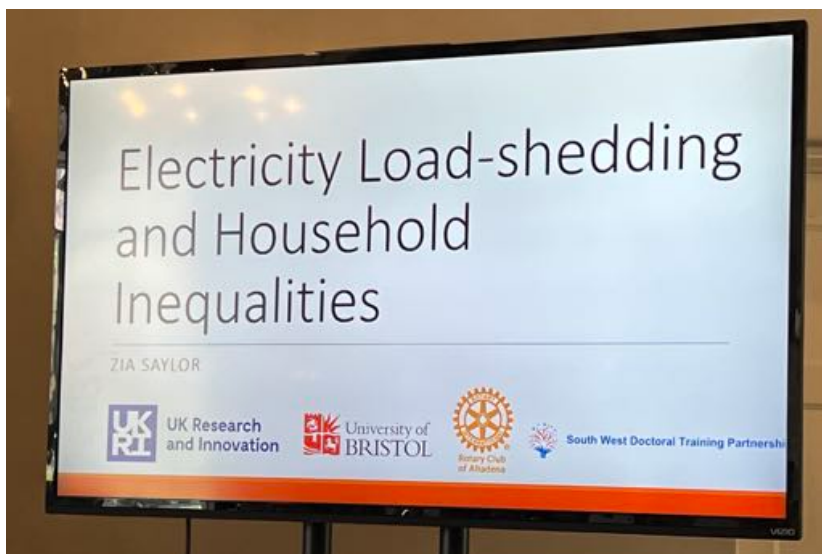


Speaker Zia, with her mother, Nora

### FELLOWSHIP EVENT THANKS TO LISA FOR HOSTING!



Above: Elizabeth Brooks, Sabrina Verduzco, Maricela and Maria Arton-Perez



For her talk on Thursday, December 19<sup>th</sup>, Zia spoke about her current Ph.D. research, which is focused on post-Apartheid electricity policy in South Africa. Integrated into her research are questions tackling tough subjects, including social inequity and temporal inequity in electrical policy and delivery, impacts of climate change and energy justice, as well as educational and mortality impacts on the population of color in Cape Town.



Theo, Tom P. Tony and Ann Hill

Zia's talk was not only interesting but has relevance in the US as well. When load-shedding occurs [demand increases and availability decreases], how does the frequent and sudden shut down of electrical infrastructure affect children, seniors, and those at the lower-socioeconomic strata? Zia intends to use qualitative data collected through interviews and quantitative data to inform her research as part of her methodology.



Her PowerPoint presentation reflected her strengths in policy and mixed methods research and was comprehensive and informative.

Finally, the Q and A session was particularly lively, with good solid questions being asked by our Rotarians. Zia's responses showed the depth and breadth of her training and expertise in the area. Joining Zia at the meeting were her mother, Nora Zamichow, her childhood friend Roman, and his father, Xavier Inguanzo.



Zoot carving the festive jambon!



Ed leads the 4-Way Test



## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

President Maricela

### 2025 Arrives in One Week!

We have all heard the saying, "Wow, where did the time go?". I can attest to that. This year just flew by! And of course, my first 6 months as Club President has now come to an end. I pledge the same, if not more, focus over the next six months. My advice to next year's Club President (Brad) or the following year (Lisa) is to keep preparing for the many wonderful memories and experiences that our club members will have. In fact, President-Elect Brad will be attending the President-Elect Training scheduled for February 21-23. This is where more than 250 President-Elects come together for intense training about Rotary and the impact a Club President has on their club.

Our weekly SPARKS newsletter is a good way to document what we have done. Did you know that we have more than 5 years (and soon to have 10 years) of SPARKS available for members to review? You will have to log into DacDb, click on the "Club Bulletin" tile and you will see SPARKS bulletins dating back to 2018. It is fun to see and read about what was going on in April 2019, November 2020 (during the height of COVID), October 2022 or just last summer.

## 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

In this edition of SPARKS, there are many photos of different events that our club participated in. These include: our Fellowship event at the lovely home of member Lisa Rickard (whose newly installed door and molding was painted just a few hours of our arrival), the tour of the UCLA Locker Room and CA High School Hall of Fame Museum at the Rose Bowl (pictured right), our last meeting of the year where we heard from our currently club-sponsored Graduate student Zia Saylor who is working on her Doctorate Degree at the University of Bristol, UK and last, the Holiday Celebration at Loma Alta Park. It was at the park where Rotary members Mark Mariscal, Zoot Velasco, Rene Amy (in the Red Suit), club candidate Veronica Jones and I spent a little time as volunteers. There were more than 2,000 people in attendance.

For those of you who signed up to help decorate the Rotary Float this coming Friday afternoon into the late evening, I look forward to working side by side with you in Irwindale.

Our CLUB ASSEMBLY will be the next meeting (January 9th). That is where our club leaders will discuss the upcoming events through June 30th. It would be nice to have a large turnout. This meeting is also where we take a vote on our nominations to serve on the club's Board of Directors starting on July 1, 2025.

***Merry Christmas, Happy Holidays and see you in 2025!***

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### **Board Nominations by Brad Roeber, President-Elect**

What a privilege to serve as the Chair of the Nominating Committee for the proposed Board members for the term of July 1, 2025 - June 30, 2027. Joining me on the committee are the last 4 Club Presidents (Dawn, Doug, Mark and Sarah). The Committee presented to the current Board of Directors last week at a special meeting of the BOD. The slate of candidates presented were: Doug Colliflower, Maria Arton-Perez and Elizabeth Schreib. The slate will be presented to the Club members during the CLUB ASSEMBLY on January 9th. Per our By-Laws of the club, additional nominations to the board may be made by petition and presented to the club secretary (James Gorton) at least one week prior to the January 9th meeting when bearing the signatures of ten (10) or more members. If there are questions, please do not hesitate to reach out to me.

## **Rose Bowl Reception and Locker Room Tour**



Above: Doug receiving recognition from State Senator Sasha Renee Perez  
Below: Dominick Corey and ALD Director Nikki Winslow



Captain Jabari Williams, Zoot Velasco, Mark Mariscal, Rene Amy



## A FESTIVE DITTY BY ZOOT!

'Twas the night before Christmas, when all through the club

Not a creature was stirring, they were all at the pub;

Dues were sent out to Rotarians with care,

In hopes that new members soon would be there;  
The lunchers were nestled all snug in their booths;  
While white meat chicken got stuck on mouth roofs;  
And quinoa and green beans, with water from tap,  
For after the meeting comes a long winter's nap,  
When out on golf greens there arose such a clatter,  
I sprang from my booth to see what was the matter.  
Away to the window I flew like a flash,  
Stepped over Mike Zoeller with Happy Bucks cash.  
The sun on the mountains through pollution's great glow,  
Gave a lustre of twinkle to objects below,  
When what to my wondering eyes did appear,  
But Mark and Maricela with a Tesla in gear,  
With Brad as the driver, so lively and quick,  
They were partying down with a soused St. Nick.  
They called to the lot in our room all the same,  
And they whistled, and shouted, and called us by name:  
"Come, Mike Knoll and, Dawn! Come Jim, Craig, and Doug!  
Come, Lisa! come, Sarah! Come, give us a hug!  
To the top of the balcony! to the top of the wall!  
Come party! Come sample! Come drink, come all!"  
As leaves that before the wild hurricane fly,  
When they meet with an obstacle, mount to the sky;  
So up to the club roof the coursers they flew  
With the Tesla full of beer, and great spirit too—  
And then, in a twinkling, I heard on the roof  
The prancing and laughing at each little goof.



Mark, Jose and Sandra Valenzuela, Senator Perez, Alicia and Chell from Platinum Stitches & Embroidery



Mark, Dawn, Maricela and Lisa Velasco from the PCC Foundation Team



Volunteers at the Loma Alta Park Holiday event. Rene Amy was there too but inside as Santa Claus!

As I drew in my head and was turning around,  
 Down the stairway, the rabble came with a bound.  
 They were dressed all in flannel, from head to their feet,  
 And their clothes were all stained with ale and white meat;  
 A bundle of name tags they brought to the fest,  
 And dealt them all out with the flag, "Four Way Test."  
 Their eyes—how they twinkled! Their dimples, so merry!  
 Their cheeks were like roses, their nose like a cherry!  
 Their piqued little mouths were a smiling crew,  
 And the chins were all dribbled with IPA brews;  
 We gave scholarships out and business awards,  
 And Altadena was warmer and all in accord;  
 We brought musical concerts that made people cheer,  
 And money from pitchers stopped polio's smear.  
 We are well fed, joking and jolly old elves,  
 And we laugh when we meet, enjoying ourselves;  
 A wink of the eye and a twitch of the ears,  
 Bringing Altadena joy for 75 years,  
 We speak few words but move as we make,  
 Volunteers planting flags and dishing pancakes,  
 And if you miss us doing our thing,  
 Just give us a nod, 'cause on Thursdays we sing;  
 There are funny old songs, and orators with heft,  
 And our leaders have love and our actions are deft.  
 We exclaim it to all as we peel out on a dime—  
*"Happy Holidays to all, and see you next time!"*



## Greetings from Across the Miles!

We may not celebrate the same holidays but our Club's gifts and support are bringing joy this festive season... and all year round!

*Happy  
Christmas*



Laligurash School and Community Hospital (incl. the ambulance provided by our Global Grant).  
Health and happiness to all!

