



'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

**THIS WEEK: ZIA SAYLOR
GLOBAL GRANT SCHOLAR**

Altadena Town and Country Club, Thursday at noon

Speaker Chair for December: Steve Kerekes

DECEMBER 19, 2024

**December is:
Disease Prevention & Treatment
Month**



Zia Saylor is the Global Grant Scholar for Altadena Rotary, currently pursuing her PhD in Social Policy from the University of Bristol in the United Kingdom. Her research focuses on anti-poverty policy, specifically within South Africa, marking a continuation of research she has conducted and published since her undergraduate years at

Williams College. She received her Masters of Science in Public Policy through a Fulbright Scholarship also at the University of Bristol, and hopes to use her education to improve the research on and policies around improving access to opportunities for others, particularly along gendered lines of inequality. She has worked in policy engagement in California, Indiana, and Massachusetts in addition to her international research. In her free time she enjoys hiking with her border collies in Eaton Canyon and reading.

Officers

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

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Secretary: James Gorton
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Craig Cox
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Mark Mariscal
Sarah O'Brien
Lisa Rickard
Doug Colliflower
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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

**LAST WEEK: HOLIDAY MUSIC BY MELODIA MARIPOSA,
RECOGNITION OF 2024 SUMMER CONCERT SERIES
SPONSORS, SILLY SWEATERS... AND FESTIVE CHEER!**

Photos below and opposite



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



<https://melodiamariposa.org/>

'Ugly' Sweater contest and holiday colors!



Jose and Sandra of Grocery Outlet with Mark Mariscal



Paula and Jim Orlandini with Assembly Member John Harabedian



Above: guests Xavier and Zia
R: Theo and Dawn



Dawn and Robert



Nikki and Ashley with Assembly Member John Harabedian



L-R: Maria, Jim and Cristal (City of Hope), Lisa



Singing Jingle Bells!



Glenda, Cindy and Elsy, guests of Maricela



With newest member Justin Rickard



PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

President Maricela

Sweaters Are a Person's Best Friend!

What a week! I don't know about you, but other than our 75th Anniversary Dinner last February, I cannot remember so many people attending one of our meetings! Also, what a fantastic turnout to welcome our newest member, Mr. Justin Rickard, sponsored by his mother, Lisa. In addition to pinning a new member with the Red Badge, our newly elected Assembly member John Harabedian attended and brought Certificates of Appreciation to those who sponsored our 2024 Summer Concert Series. Almost 70 people were in attendance.



Entertainment was provided by two talented musicians courtesy of Melodia Mariposa. I encourage you to attend their Annual Holiday concert (December 19th at 6pm) at the Altadena Town and Country Club. I hope to see you there! Also on Thursday, Craig Cox met with representatives from the LA County Parks Department to discuss the possibility of our club donating a four-sided clock with the Rotary Wheel in the dial that will be solar operated. This is part of our gift to the community in celebration of our club's 75th Anniversary.

Friday afternoon was such an exciting time. Club members Brad, Mark, Lisa, Diana, and Jennifer helped with the Holiday Party and Toy Giveaway at Farnsworth Park. Our club was responsible for bringing more than 300 toys (some purchased, but most of them donated by the community), and almost 200 tamales. We also provided food gift cards for 35 families from Grocery Outlet. A big thank you to Jose and Sandra for helping out at the last minute. This program has grown over the last few years with Brad heating up more than 14 dozen tamales! I heard that Lisa, Diana and Jennifer, in addition to giving out toys, poured a few hundred cups of hot cocoa and horchata!

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

BELOW: PHOTOS FROM DOOR OF HOPE AND TOY GIVEAWAY EVENTS!



Mark, Brad and Paula Eckert



On Saturday, thanks to funds from the former club that merged with us (Pasadena After Hours Rotary), we staffed a booth at the Door of Hope Holiday Celebration (more in the article written by our club's President-Elect Brad).

I want to circle back to last week's meeting. As I wrote last week, I asked that members attend and participate in an "ugly" sweater contest. Actually, I was quite surprised to count 18 participants. And honestly, these were not ugly but FESTIVE. Our two winners, Dr. David Campbell and Catalina Theodoros (Library) were in good spirits as each was aware a bottle of wine. In addition to those in sweaters, there were at least another 15 people in holiday colors and hats. What a way to celebrate together.

In closing, by the time you are reading this, our last two Fellowship events of the year will have occurred. The first one, at the home of Lisa Rickard, was a way to casually speak with club members and other selected guests. The second one, we were partnering with the Altadena Town Council and Altadena Library Foundation to tour the UCLA Locker Room and other areas of the Rose Bowl. A special thanks to Dominick Correy and the Rose Bowl Operating Company.

A reminder that we will NOT hold meetings on December 26th and January 2nd. We return to the ATCC with our Club Assembly on January 9th.

Immediate Feedback For Doing Good

By Brad Roeber - President-Elect

Many of you have heard me say time and time again, that I joined Rotary because of a discussion with Mr Theo Clarke during one of the 2021 Concerts at Farnsworth Park. Since then, I have had some very nice Rotary moments. This club is really active!

Let's start with just last Thursday. What a luncheon we had honoring sponsors who helped fund the 2024 Summer Concert Series! During lunch, my wife Susie and I enjoyed spending time with Theo (who became my sponsor in 2021). Theo is now an Honorary Member of the club. On Friday, I signed up to help at the Farnsworth Park Toy Giveaway and Holiday Party. I have participated before. This year, our club joined with the Altadena Sheriff Station in addition to the



Deputy Art Balyan and Captain Jabari Williams (above and below)



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Park's program. The Sheriff Station worked with 3 local schools who nominated families to receive toys and gift cards. After helping separate toys into age groups, I asked Mark what was next on the list. To my surprise, I ended up in the kitchen warming the 15 dozen or so tamales that our club purchased to give away to those who were attending the Park's Holiday program. For those of you who have heated tamales a few at a time, it is really more of a challenge when you're trying to heat all 15 dozen within a 30 minute period. And Mark, well, he helped for a few minutes and then disappeared outside - having fun and playing "supervisor"! Our other members helping were Lisa, Diana and Jennifer. Next year, it will be nice to have a few more volunteers.

On Saturday, our club was one of 15 local organizations who assisted 'DOOR OF HOPE', a local non-profit organization whose mission is "Empowering families Facing Homelessness To transform Their Lives". This was their annual Holiday Celebration for current and past clients. Our club has participated in this event twice before since merging with the Pasadena After-Hours Rotary Club in 2022. This is the first time that I had an opportunity to be involved with the event. Joining me were Mark Mariscal, Dennis Mckinley, Paula Eckert and Tom Polenzani. WHAT A BLAST we had!



Cont'd: There was snow for the kids to play in, all children 18 and under received gifts, each family received at least \$50 in gift cards, and we organised food and games. Our club also set up a "CORN HOLE" game toss. Every child who participated received a prize. These included granola bars, some candy, squishable stuffed animals, board games or Target Gift Cards. We even allowed adults to try their skill; anyone landing four out of four received a \$15 or \$10 gift card depending on age. All of us got so much more out of this volunteer day by enjoying the faces on the DOH clients who stopped by our booth. Next Christmas, I hope to encourage more of you to assist at this event. If you ever wanted immediate feedback for "Service Above Self", this event is one for you. This could be "YOUR ROTARY MOMENT".



Above: Former club member and Past-President David Smith in one of his familiar roles. HO HO HO!



<https://www.doorofhope.us/>