

Rotary
ROTARY CLUB OF ALTADENA



'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: Jennifer E. Jones, Dist. 5300 Gov: Roger Gutierrez

**THIS WEEK: Don Simkovich: Authoring Books
for Business and Adventure**

Location: Altadena Town and Country Club

Speaker Chair for July: David Campbell



As a fiction author, Don Simkovich has written a series of 4 detective books about Tom Stone, all based in Los Angeles. In his latest Kindle book, **A Deadly Path**, a father-son hike takes a deadly twist in this gripping short story e-book featuring Jake Sharpe and his son, hiking with Tom Stone in the foothills above Los Angeles.

The other three books are available on Amazon and all outlets. These titles are: **A Nitty Gritty Christmas, Sweltering Summer Nights, and Day of the Dead.**

As a non-fiction author, Don has written stories of men and women in Southern California who have overcome daunting challenges, created innovative enterprises, and who offer input on principles for success. The lives they've impacted reach around the country and the globe.

Don is a ghost writer for doctors, presenting patients and prospective patients with the benefits of having these particular doctors treat their



**IMAGINE
ROTARY**



JULY 21, 2022

JULY MEANS... A NEW ROTARY YEAR!

Officers

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626-524-4158

Vice President: TBC

President Elect: Dr. Dawn Digrius Smith

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Bus: 626-657-2287

Secretary: James Gorton

Bus: 626-793-6215

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International: Sarah O'Brien

Community Service: Doug Colliflower

Vocational: Steve Kerekes

Youth Contests, Scholarships, Awards:

Mike Zoeller

Youth Activities: Tony Hill

Foundation: Steve Kerekes

condition. For example, Dr. Ron Koslowski is a dental specialist, who works with oral cancer patients. Dr. Truong is an Upper Cervical Chiropractor. Don explains how the brain stem has such a powerful impact on our health. For a real estate agent, Don provided a journalistic approach to Southern California commercial real estate developer Steve Craig's career which had an impact on outlet malls in the region and nationally.

LAST WEEK: James Macpherson

Publisher, Pasadena Now

Speaker Chair: David Campbell

Program Review: Brad Roeber



Today's speaker was James Macpherson, who has resided in Pasadena since birth, matriculating at Pacific Oaks and the Polytechnic School of Pasadena. Dating back to 1973, he published a full-color glossy city magazine for Pasadena called Pasadena Magazine. He and his wife are currently the publishers of Pasadena Now, which they conceived in 2003. The internet was young at the time and MacPherson was clearly a pioneer believing that digital media was the wave of the future. Originally, the publication focused on arts and culture in Pasadena, but, as print publications began to wane, they

added local news as well. Pasadena Now attracts over 265,000 unique readers monthly, has a social media fan base of over 110,000 and a daily email readership of 12,000. Pasadena Now employs 15 full time staff and "More people get Pasadena news and information daily than all other Pasadena publications combine" including the Pasadena Star News!

James clearly had great vision as Pasadena Now has filled the news gap that was left void by the decline of print publications. He likens their current role to that of a 'news radio station that never stops', citing a recent Sunday afternoon when he was attempting to relax in his back yard only to be interrupted by a caller who had instant news that he wanted published. Local events create the desire for people to desire information about what is happening – and now. Two recent events involved crimes that shut down the Target store in East Pasadena and another that forced temporary shutdowns of Pasadena City College and Cal Tech. When the second incident occurred, James recounted taking a call from a woman who, in hushed tones asked him, "what is happening at Cal Tech? I am in the basement of one of the buildings

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PASADENA NOW

www.pasadenanow.com



James Macpherson with July Speaker Chair, David Campbell

SUMMER CONCERTS IN THE PARK....THIS SAT: Mariachi Divas



Photo/Wikipedia

hiding, and I am very frightened.” James was able to assure her that she was safe. He mentioned that they have close relationships with local police and that puts them in a bind at times because Pasadena Now gets information that the authorities do not want released just yet.

Pasadena Now does not take editorial positions on issues – including refusing to make political endorsements. They believe this, “We endorse the voters and their ability to make their own judgements.” James told us that his publication is a great place to list local events – including Rotary! They are always interested in good story ideas, but only when they connect to Pasadena and Altadena in some way.

James is clearly dedicated to his craft and Pasadena Now, rising at 3:45am each day to get prepare the day’s email, which is released at 7 am. He was asked how Pasadena Now is funded and replied that it is 100% supported by advertising revenues. He mentioned that they have never charged readers any type of subscription or access fee and that, “WE NEVER WILL!” He and his wife, Candice Merrill started Pasadena Now from scratch, in answer to another query. Another interesting note is that they cover the Pasadena City Council and its varied committees very closely. James informed us that the EV charging stations in Pasadena will be expanding soon and that they will not be offered for free much longer. This scoop came directly from their astute coverage of the aforementioned city meetings. James was asked about his view of print news in the future, and he indicated that he was very pessimistic. He added that he would like to expand the offering of Pasadena Now to include on demand and streaming content directed and produced for consumption by residents of Pasadena and Altadena.

James was an excellent speaker and is clearly a visionary. All attendees learned a lot from his talk.



James Macpherson, Publisher
Pasadena Now & Altadena Now
p:(626) 737-8486 Ext. 7 | w:<http://www.pasadenanow.com>



Did You Know..? The Mariachi Divas de Cindy Shea (performing this Sat at Farnsworth Park), is an all-female mariachi band based in Los Angeles, California. The band was founded in 1999 by Cindy Shea. The band was founded in 1999 by Cindy Shea. In 2009, they became the first all-female mariachi band ever to be nominated for a Grammy Award, and the first to win one! (Wikipedia) <https://www.mariachidivas.com/>

Members Helping Members*

By Mark Mariscal

Last week, Jose and Sandra Valenzuela from Grocery Outlet Altadena asked Doug and I if we had any access to a portable sound system. On Friday, the Altadena Chamber of Commerce and the Grocery Outlet store will be holding a dedication ceremony for the new “Greetings from Altadena” mural by Victor Ving and Lisa Beggs, that was recently installed. I reached out to club members Elva and Liz from Families Forward Learning Center to see if they had a portable sound system. They said yes and agreed to let Jose and Sandra use it. This is just another good example of Rotary members helping each other. And with that, all club members and anyone else you wish to share with are invited to the mural dedication ceremony this Friday in the parking lot of grocery outlet.

Friday, July 22, 9:30 am - noon

2270 N Lake Ave.

Altadena, CA 91001

*** Please see the press release and more information by René Amy!**



Presented by the Rotary Club of Altadena in Cooperation with LA County Parks & Recreation

Concerts in the Park

25TH ANNUAL CONCERT SERIES 2022

All concerts are FREE and start at 7:00 p.m. on the following Saturdays at the Amphitheater at Farnsworth Park (568 East Mt. Curve Avenue, Altadena, CA 91001)

| Saturday, July 9 | Saturday, July 30 | Saturday, August 20 |
|-------------------|---------------------|---------------------|
| CASH UP FRONT | LIGHTNIN' WILLIE | PAST ACTION HEROES |
| Saturday, July 16 | Saturday, August 6 | Saturday, August 27 |
| THE TRIBE BAND | BLUE BREEZE BAND | BOYS OF SUMMER |
| Saturday, July 23 | Saturday, August 13 | Saturday, Sept. 10 |
| MARIACHI DIVAS | UPSTREAM | THE WHO EXPERIENCE |

Live Concert presented by the Sheriff's Support Group of Altadena

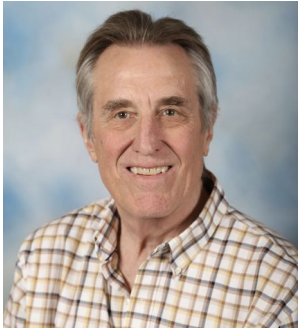
To learn more about the Concerts in the Park, go to <http://www.chthelibrary.org>

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PRESIDENT'S PIECE: Promoting Rotary

By President Doug



Since my tenure commenced as your President I have been talking about branding and marketing. I feel strongly that we all should have the mindset that we are members of our Membership Committee, ambassadors for our club and the Rotary Brand. Promoting Rotary to the public can be as simple as wearing your Rotary pin, wearing a logoed hat or tee shirt, or becoming active in our marketing and membership activities.

I often have people ask me, what does Rotary do? Are you prepared to answer? If not, consider some of the following,

Rotary is a global service organization with 1.4 million members. Rotary members believe that we have a shared responsibility to take action on our world's most persistent issues. Our 46,000+ clubs work together to:

- Promote peace
- Fight disease
- Provide clean water, sanitation, and hygiene
- Save mothers and children
- Support education
- Grow local economies
- Protect the environment

In closing the conversation, I suggest that they visit Rotary.org. And, if they have great interest, invite them to lunch.

Yours in Rotary, see you Thursday!



New "Postcard" Mural with Guardian Bear Turns Heads in Altadena

By René Amy

Sightings of black bears in and around Altadena have become relatively common,

but there's one bear that's now the talk of the town: "Rubio," the life-sized, fully-realistic painted bear on the side of the town's Grocery Outlet that's been getting a whole lot of double-takes whenever he's noticed.

And on July 22, Altadenans will formally welcome Rubio - and the massive new piece of head-turning, donated, crowdfunded, public art that he continuously guards - into their community with a ribbon-cutting ceremony for the new centrally-located "Greetings From Altadena" postcard mural. A

Summer Concert Set Up Detail

By President Doug



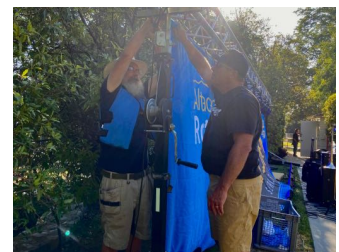
There are many elements in preparing for each of the concerts on Saturday night. In the photos, you can see that we have a team that helps prepare the hanging of the backdrop behind the band. This is part of our branding to ensure that the community knows that the concerts are produced by the Rotary Club of Altadena.



Concert prep starts around 1pm with the arrival of Sound and Lighting Equipment. Rotary members start arriving around 4:30 to help set

the stage, concession stand Rotary Information table and banner placement.

At the end of the evening, it all comes down and is packed away until the following week!



Above photos: Mike Zoeller

René Amy and Juan Carlos from JCL Sound and Lighting

René Amy and Brad Roeber

special presentation will provide Presidential recognition of the new mural and the volunteer effort behind it.

The mural, the product of the husband-and-wife muralist team of Victor Ving and Lisa Beggs, is a present to the community, and was funded by donations to cover the costs of materials and equipment. Under the moniker "Greetings Tour," Ving and Beggs have completed over 50 similarly-themed murals across the country, while traveling by motorhome. The couple recently settled in nearby Pasadena - and almost immediately began creating location-focused murals on local buildings.

Locals have taken to social media to express both admiration for the massive "Greetings From Altadena" mural and concern for the (painted) bear's well-being, with some even expressing hopes that someone will provide it with water during these hot summer days.

"Watching that old blank wall transform into such a vibrant and colorful tapestry of our beautiful community's history and highlights has been a true delight," said Sandra Valenzuela, co-owner/operator of Altadena's Grocery Outlet, where the mural is located. "I knew from the instant that Victor approached us that it would be a perfect way to celebrate our community and to welcome visitors. My husband, Jose, and I are simply tickled pink to host this amazing artwork. And everyone loves Rubio!"

Work on the mural began almost as soon as the ink was dry on all of the signatures required on all of the forms required by multiple levels of all of the various corporate interests involved - a process that took almost nine months to complete.

The artists intend for the mural to create a destination landmark and a symbol of hometown pride, and several of their out-of-state followers even visited Altadena specifically to see the mural being created.

"The sudden, intense Summer heat slowed the work down, and we did do the most-intensive prep work yet on any of our projects. We really want this mural to withstand the passage of time, so it was worth the extra time and effort," said Ving. "The local community has been terrifically supportive, and it's been humbling to see the power of public art. We even had a family from Washington state who were on a family vacation to Disneyland take a side trip to come explore Altadena because of the murals!"

The mural's lettering includes several different key aspects of Altadena life and history, including a dramatic aerial drone view of the community, world-famous Christmas Tree Lane, artist Charles White and author Octavia Butler, the Star of Palawoo, local hiking trails, and the historic Mt. Lowe railway - and, of course, Rubio the bear. There are even a few "Easter eggs" visible in the imagery for viewers to discover, if they look very closely.



"I tell folks that the devil is truly in the details," said community activist René Amy, who donated time and expertise to secure the wall, water blast it, repair it, and prep it with a special epoxy primer before the painting process began. "This is such a great addition to our community!"



Ribbon-Cutting Ceremony:
Friday, July 22, 9:30 am - noon
2270 N Lake Ave.
Altadena, CA 91001

All images copyright Greetings Tour, Inc.
For more information:
<https://www.greetingstour.com/murals/altadena-mural>

(Editor's note: apologies that image was used previously without credit)



Last week's concert by The Tribe Band
More fun this Sat! Photo/Doug