
Rotary

Club of Pasadena, CA

SPOKES NEWSLETTER


DISTRICT 5300 * Rotary Club 794 * December 20, 2024 * #01-0049

www.pasadenarotary.com



UP COMING MEETING CALENDAR

(The Upcoming Meeting Calendar is always located at the bottom of SPOKES)

- Dec. 25, 2024 - DARK-NO MEETING - CHRISTMAS
 - Jan. 1, 2025 - DARK-NO MEETING - HAPPY NEW YEAR!
 - Jan. 8, 2025 - Ed Morales, President, Tournament of Roses
 - Jan. 15, 2025 - Naomi Hirahara - *"Pasadena Girl Investigates: How Japanese Influences and Immigrants Transformed a City"*
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Simply Stephen Smith's Spokes Speaks

I would like to have our members be aware that Rotary International has a podcast which can be accessed via on.rotary.org/podcast. These podcasts typically range from 15 to 30 minutes per podcast and are extremely informative and educational.

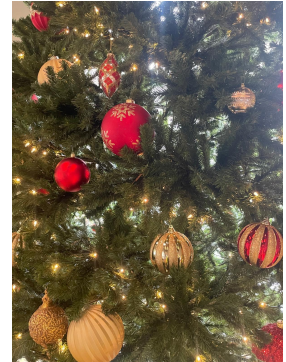
There was an enlightening podcast in November 2024 regarding the two earthquakes which struck Turkey and Syria on February 6, 2023 and how Rotary International responded with funds and boots on the ground.

There was a podcast regarding the Polio updates in the Gaza Strip from a July 2024 podcast. Three polio experts from around the world spoke about working in regions where wild polio has long been eradicated, to the two countries where wild polio remains endemic.

A podcast entitled "Music as medicine" aired in August of 2024 where scientists, doctors and caretakers of dementia patients are finding that music is medicine. For a decade, Music Mends Minds has helped organize music groups for people diagnosed with neurodegenerative dementias.

If anyone in our club (or elsewhere) has never listened to a podcast before, please consider going to on.rotary.org/podcast and pick and choose the topic(s) that might peak your interest.

Stephen D. Smith
President 2024 - 2025
Rotary Club of Pasadena
Cell 310.908.1779



PHOTOS OF THE WEEK

LEFT: Alan Schier, Armida Baylon & Ali Smyser
RIGHT: Ben Sellick, Angie Pizano & Gui Bittencourt




ROTARY VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES & EVENTS

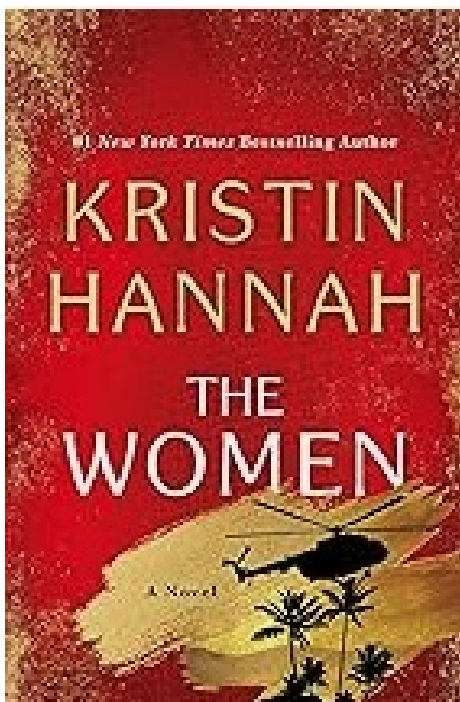


Eaton Canyon Trail Clean-Up Followed by a Rotary Roamers Hike

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 28TH @ 10 AM

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- ▶ MEET AT THE MOUNT WILSON/PINECREST GATE, MT WILSON TOLL RD, ALTADENA, CA (BY THE BRIDGE TO THE FALLS)
 - ▶ STREET PARKING CAN BE LIMITED, SO WATCH NO PARKING SIGNS AND ARRIVE EARLY! WEAR SHOES YOU DON'T MIND GETTING WET.

Email Amanda Pumilia at
apumilia@yahoo.com with questions



ROTARY READERS

Rotary Readers meet monthly on the first Monday at 6 pm.

MONDAY - JANUARY 6th

Bring something to share for dinner.

Helen Baatz will review *The Women* by Kristin Hannah at the lovely home of Liza Billington and Cory Brendel.

PLEASE RSVP to Liza at lbillington56@gmail.com or Cory at corybrendel@gmail.com.

If you have any questions, email Cathy Simms at simmsie1@pacbell.net.

The Scoot Zone

By Past President Mary Lou Byrne, Bureau Chief

Photos by Gui Bittencourt & Tammy Silver



The University Club was sparkling this week, with holiday decorations everywhere! During lunch we were treated to a holiday oboe concert by **Mike Bernard**, accompanied by Ann Louise Christensen on piano. **President Stephen Smith** rang the bell at 12:30, and **Don Andruess** and **Past President Mary Lou Byrne**, accompanied by the Rotary band (Ann Louise, Gino Escarrega on percussion, and Joe Tortomasi on bass), led us in a fun gender-swapped version of Baby, It's Cold Outside (despite the balmy Pasadena weather – we're so lucky!).

Alan Schier gave the inspiration, a quote from Scottish Himalayan explorer William Hutchinson Murray about commitment, ending with this from Goethe: "Whatever you can do or dream you can, begin it. Boldness has genius, power and magic in it. Begin it now."



We remained standing while **Past President Cathy Simms** delivered the sad news that Rotarian Vahe Simonian passed away on April 29 at the age of 96 and his obituary just appeared in the Los Angeles Times this week:

<https://www.legacy.com/us/obituaries/latimes/name/vahe-simonian-obituary?id=57014463> Vahe was a giant in Pasadena and Los Angeles – a Presbyterian minister who was instrumental in the construction of the sanctuary at Pasadena Presbyterian Church. His wife, Ani, is a former Pasadena Rotary Teacher of Excellence and Cathy noted she would doubtless appreciate hearing from Rotarians. We observed a moment of silence in Vahe's honor.

Sergeant at Arms **Robert Lyons** helped introduce our guests, who were hosted this week by **Howard Raff, Tammy Silver, Mike**

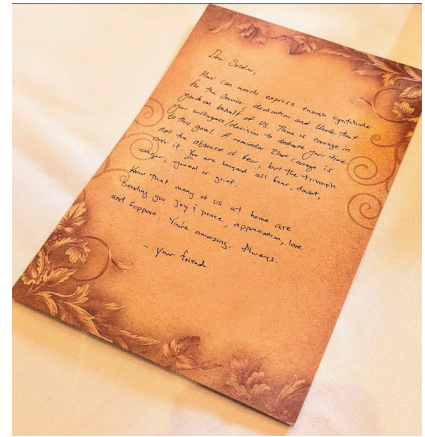
Bernard, and Don Andruess.

Announcements: **Dean Billman**, District Chair of the Polio Plus Campaign, urged everyone to contact Sandi Mejia at sandimejia@sbcglobal.net to make a \$100 donation to join the Polio Plus Society and help with Rotary's ongoing fight against this horrible disease. It's more important than ever now!

Angie Pizano announced the next Rotary Roamers hike/service project. Details above.

Deborah Lewis teased us with news of a (possible trivia-themed?) fundraiser coming on February 28, 2025 in the downstairs pub at the University Club. Mark your calendar and watch this space for further details!

Our program this week was not really a program at all, but an in-meeting service project. **Past President Mary Lou Byrne** explained that in the early 2010s, her daughter was in the U.S. Marine Corps and after she returned from a two-year posting in Japan there was a welcome-home party. One of the Marine's best friends couldn't attend because he was in Marine Corps boot camp, so all the party-goers sat down and wrote letters to him during the party. It was such a success for both the letter-writers and the recipient that **Mary Lou** decided to replicate it at Rotary.



We are partnering with A Million Thanks, which is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization that provides support and appreciation to our active and veteran military men and women through sending letters and granting betterment of life wishes, as well as providing higher education scholarships to their children. Our job was to write a letter to "any service member," offering thanks and support.



Fred Soldwedel, who according to the **PP Mary Lou** is "one of the few Rotarians who actually reads the Spokes newsletter," had been busy in advance and drafted his letter already. **Mary Lou** read it to the crowd as inspiration, and (in predictable **PP Mary Lou** style) choked up when she got to the closing: "Fair winds and following seas." There was more inspiration in the form of sample letters that were shown on the screen as we wrote our letters.

There were pens, stationery and writing implements on every table, as well as envelopes so people could donate a few dollars for postage (shoutout to **Gary Kearney** for helping set up the room before the meeting, and collecting everything afterwards). Rotarians enjoyed a fun half-hour chatting with one another while they wrote their letters. The band (Ann Louise, Gino, Joe, and Don with help from Cheryl) provided plenty of holiday music to keep everybody in a happy holiday mood.



About halfway through, **PP Mary Lou** asked if anybody had a "masterpiece" they would like to

share, and **Dean Billman** took the mic and read his letter, followed by **David McAlexander**, who brought the house down with his letter about the benefits of his own military service, including "being able to date women who would otherwise be out of my league."

We ended up with 69 heartfelt letters and \$149 in cash donations. **PP Mary Lou** will deliver the letters and donations to A Million Thanks after the new year. If anyone reading this would like to write their own letter to be included in the delivery (maybe think about doing your own letter-writing event with your family), just bring it to a Rotary meeting in January and she will make it happen. (No envelopes, no commercial cards, no glitter, no negativity!)

President Stephen concluded the meeting at 1:30, giving (a very surprised) **PP Mary Lou** the "magic mug" speaker gift and wishing those who celebrate a wonderful Christmas, and a great New Year to all. The band sent us off with a rousing version of We Wish You a Merry Christmas, and everyone left in fine spirits. We'll reconvene on January 8.



L2R: Paul Martin, Deborah Lewis, Fred Soldwedel, Debi Kroman, Paul Roach, PP Mary Lou Byrne, Gary Kearney, President Stephen, George Falardeau

POLIO PIG & COMMITTEE ANNOUNCEMENTS AT WEDNESDAY MEETING

ALL ANNOUNCEMENTS MUST BE PRE-APPROVED!

Wish to "Show & Tell" us what you are up to or make an announcement (30 seconds) about your family, business or a favorite nonprofit or a Committee announcement? Email Wendy at office@pasadenarotary.com by Tues at noon. Minimum donation for Polio Pig Announcement: \$20 or for \$30+ which is billed to your account. Additional \$20 If you wish to leave flyers at the Registration table or hand-out at end of the meeting.

HAPPY BIRTHDAY!!

Tammy Silver	Dec. 24
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UPCOMING PROGRAMS

Dec. 25, 2024 - DARK - MERRY CHRISTMAS
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JAN. 1, 2025 - DARK - HAPPY NEW YEAR!

Jan. 8, 2025 - Ed Morales, President, Tournament of Roses

Jan. 15, 2025 - Naomi Hirahara - "*Pasadena Girl Investigates: How Japanese Influences and Immigrants Transformed a City*"

Jan. 22, 2025 - Dan Stover Instrumental Music Competition

Jan. 29, 2025 - Miguel Marquez, Pasadena City Manager - Housing in Pasadena

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**Making
Magic**

by doing Service

PROMOTING PEACE FIGHTING DISEASE

PROVIDING CLEAN WATER

SAVING MOTHERS AND CHILDREN

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, Dede Venkat

Non-Voting Member: Amanda Pumilia, Chair, The Impact Club

Rotary Club of Pasadena

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