
Rotary

Club of Pasadena, CA



SPOKES NEWSLETTER

DISTRICT 5300 * Rotary Club 794 * February 28, 2025 * #01-006

www.pasadenarotary.com

DENISE VERRET

CEO & Executive Director, Los Angeles Zoo

"The Los Angeles Zoo: Our Journey to Save Wildlife, Enrich Our Communities and Create Connections to Nature"

Introducer: PP Justene Adamec



Denise Verret, is the Chief Executive Officer and Director of the Los Angeles Zoo. As CEO and Zoo Director, she guides the Zoo's mission of saving wildlife, enriching our communities, and creating connections to nature. Denise is also committed to maximizing the welfare of the animals in the care of the Zoo by applying the most up-to-date research and advanced understanding in animal wellness, husbandry, management, and exhibit design. Denise's vision for the Zoo is to engage the Los Angeles community broadly and transform the Zoo from a destination to a vital community resource.

Denise has been actively involved in the Association of Zoos and Aquariums (AZA) for 20 years. She is an elected member of the AZA Board of Directors, most recently sworn in as the 100th Chair of the Board of Directors (2024-25). She also serves on the Board of

Directors for the Gorilla Rehabilitation and Conservation Education (GRACE) Center, located in the Democratic Republic of Congo. The GRACE center is the world's only sanctuary for rescued Grauer's gorillas and whose mission is not only to provide excellent care for rescued Grauer's gorillas but also to work alongside Congolese communities to promote the conservation of wild gorillas and their habitat. She is also a member of the USC Wrigley Institute for Environment and Sustainability Advisory Board.

Denise graduated with a Bachelor of Science in Administrative Studies from the University of California at Riverside and immediately began her career as an intern with the City of Los Angeles. Early in her government career she had the opportunity to be mentored by women of color who blazed many trails along the way. Mentoring and giving back to people of color, and in particular women, remains close to her heart and enriches her own continued leadership growth

WEDNESDAY – MARCH 5, 2025
UNIVERSITY CLUB OF PASADENA - 12:00 pm
175 N. Oakland Ave, Pasadena 91101
RSVP A MUST - Deadline: 5:00 pm MONDAY

OVERFLOW PARKING: Pasadena Heritage Blinn House
Enter parking off Madison Ave. - Do not park in any reserved parking space

Reception: Alan Schier & Mike Bernard
Lunchtime Interlude: Ann Louise Christensen
Song Leader: Don Andrues
Inspiration: George Ricciardella
Scout Zone Reporter: Dean Billman
Photographer: PE-E Tammy Silver & Gui Bittencourt
Technical: Frank Fish & Scott Carlson
Sergeant At Arms: Robert Lyons
Non-members are welcome - \$45.00 includes lunch

ZOOM is back and opens at 12:15 pm

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86515101523?pwd=dHhNZnV5c2ZqbzNQbWthbDNhYTladz09>
Meeting ID: 865 1510 1523. - Passcode: 667356

Simply Stephen Smith's Spokes Speaks



My term is officially 2/3 over. I have four months remaining until the end of June. We still have a lot to do before my term is up. I was going to lay the groundwork to our members about our next Rotary International President. His name is Mario Martins de Camargo. He has been a member of the Rotary Club of Santo Andre', Brazil since 1980, when he served as the club's Youth Exchange officer the following year at age 24 and as its President in 1992-93.

He was Governor of District 4420 in 1999-2000, Rotary Foundation trustee in 2015-19 and Rotary International director in 2019-21. He has also served as an RI learning facilitator, committee member and chair, and task force member. He and his wife, Denise da Silva de Camargo, also a Rotarian, are Major Donors and Benefactors of the Rotary Foundation.

Professionally, de Camargo was president of the printing company Grafica Bandeirantes

and has been a consultant to the print industry in Brazil. He has also been on the board of Casa da Esperanca (House of Hope), a medical center in Santo Andre' sponsored by his Rotary club that sees more than 200,000 patients a year.

Listed below are some of his bullet points:

- His biggest regret is that he stopped playing piano.
- The most memorable Rotary advice he's received: Never ask for anything, never refuse anything.
- Rotary is the best leadership training he's ever had.
- The 2025-26 presidential message is "Unite for Good."
- He gets to know a city by walking.
- He believes a focus on the environment will draw younger members.

I am quite sure that we Pasadena Rotarians will unite behind him and wish him well in his year ahead.

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

**ATTENDING THE MEETING -
MEALS & SEATING ARE
PROVIDED BASED ON RSVP'S WE
RECEIVE**

BUFFET LUNCH by Chef Tony Lu

**CLICK HERE TO
RSVP TODAY**

Please **RSVP** if you are attending!
office@pasadenarotary.com



Alan Schier and Mike Bernard greet Phyllis Currie, Martha Shenkenberg & PP Mike Farrand

PHOTO OF THE WEEK

President Elect Hillary Schenk

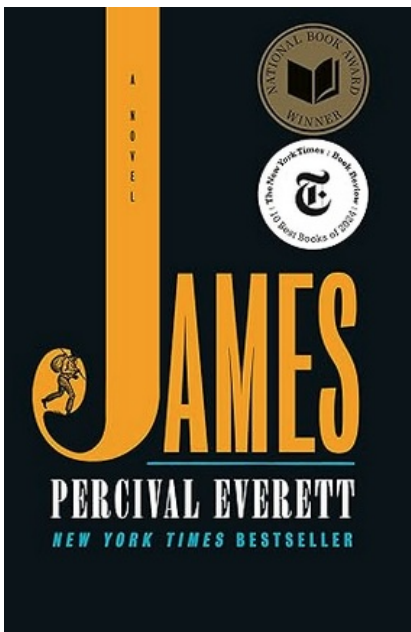


President Elect Hillary Schenk clicks a SELFIE at PETS

President Elect Hillary: *"I attended PETS (President Elect Training) training this past weekend! Wow what an experience meeting the incoming Rotary International President "Super" Mario and spending time with new friends and old!"*

"The support for Pasadena/Altadena really showed the Rotary Spirit in action. I'm so excited to be a part of this amazing group."

ROTARY VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES & EVENTS



ROTARY READERS

Rotary Readers will meet via **Zoom** on March 3rd at 6 pm

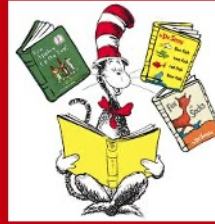
Jan Sanders will lead us in the discussion of James by Percival Everett. James is Pasadena's One City Story and the author will review his book on March 15 at Pasadena Presbyterian Church.

For more information and to RSVP for the zoom link, please contact Diana Peterson-More at dpmoeg@gmail.com



**BE A...
GUEST READER!!!**

**Washington Elementary STEM
Magnet
Invites you into TK - 5th Grade
Classrooms
In-Person Reader**



**Thursday
March 6th**

Anytime between
8:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m.
15 - 20 min Reading Block



**Email or Call
Ms. Debbie
To Schedule A Class
Appointment**



**afsharian.datevik@pusd.us
(626) 396-5840 Ext 75042**



Facilitators Needed: RYLA 2025 at Camp Cedar Crest!

The Rotary Club of Pasadena seeks volunteers for our Rotary Youth Leadership Awards (RYLA) event:
Date: March 21-23, 2025

Location: Camp Cedar Crest, Running Springs, CA

Help shape young leaders! We need enthusiastic individuals to facilitate sessions, coordinate activities, and support logistics. No special skills required - just a passion for youth development.

Enjoy a weekend in the mountains while making a difference.

Contact our RYLA committee co-chairs - **Dede Venkat** ([626.808.8114](tel:626.808.8114)) or **Desiree Alvarado** (desiree@pasadenapromos.com) to apply or learn more.

Join us in empowering the next generation of leaders!



The poster features a blue background with yellow and white text. At the top left, there is a photo of three young people (two girls and one boy) smiling. To their right is the Rotary logo and the text 'Rotary District 5300'. Further right is the RYLA logo with the text 'Rotary Youth Leadership Awards'. The main title 'Rotary YOUTH LEADERSHIP AWARDS' is written in large, bold, yellow and white letters. Below the title, there is a paragraph of text describing the program. At the bottom left, the dates and location are listed. In the center, there is a QR code. At the bottom right, there is information about the application deadline and contact email.

Rotary Youth Leadership Awards (RYLA) is an intensive, two-and-a-half-day leadership training program for high school Juniors in District 5300 chosen for their leadership potential. In addition to the development of leadership skills, RYLA is meant to develop understanding of Rotary among youth participants and reinforce and provide recognition for their efforts, accomplishments, skills and potential as leaders. Rotarians serve as facilitators to the students' learning and discovery, as well as role models of Rotary ideals of the Four Way Test and Service Above Self.

MARCH 21-23, 2025
CAMP CEDAR CREST
RUNNING SPRINGS, CA

APPLICATION DUE MARCH 1, 2025
MORE INFORMATION TO FOLLOW
EMAIL
RAGHADA@KHOURYENT.NET



The Scoot Zone

By Staff Reporter Dean Billman
Photographers: PP Ken Joe & Gui Bittencourt

Pasadena Rotary President Stephen Smith likes Trivia, so here goes: *Where in the world is there the greatest triple-threat concentration risk of the most intense wildfires, the steepest mountain gradient, and the highest likelihood of sudden torrential atmospheric-river downpours - all in one place, at one time?* According to our speaker today, it's our own San Gabriel Mountains!

President Stephen rang the big brass Rotary Bell at 12:30pm and invited **PP Phil Miles** to lead us in singing his version of "Always on my Mind", as Phil remarked that we must remember to respect the Earth, in honor of our speaker today. After the wildfires, the lyrics had us teary-eyed

about lost love, and lost neighborhoods, but always remembering them.

PP Jim Graunke struggled to find a short Inspiration that included geologists, but then remembered a story about his stint as an Altadena Water Company Board Member 30 years ago, and how the Northridge Earthquake (and a hapless engineer) had caused a landslide over a favored Sierra Club trail, leading to pending legal trouble. A senior member of the Water Board wisely recommended to “do nothing and let nature take its course, and soon a torrential rainstorm completely cleared the trail – and he was a geologist, and he was right!” PP Jim was correct – there is no short Inspiration about geologists.



Introduction of Guests:

- **PP Howard Raff** again welcomed Ms. Sneha Villava, who is a prospective member and professional speechwriter, (photo right) and introduced Ms. Bridget Lawlor of Pasadena Heritage
- **Ms. Jasiri Jenkins-Glen** introduced her friend Ms. Jenny Gumer, an attorney and LMU graduate.
- **PP Ken Joe** introduced David Dickter, a prospective member and organizational psychologist and leadership coach.

President Stephen had several announcements:

- Read Across America at Washington Elementary Stem Magnet School will be on Thursday, March 6th (see above – it is fun, and the kids are so darn cute).
- Our Rotary Trivia Night will be Friday, May 16th, with a taco station, growlers, and more! See co-chairs **Deb Lewis** and **Lisa Cavalier**.



- **Desiree Alvarado**, representing our Rotary Youth Leadership Academy (RYLA), was coached to not mention teen mentorship and leadership that will last them a lifetime, but to offer adults a free three-day trip to the mountains with a life-affirming experience.
- **Judy Taylor** gave an appealing review of the Rotary Readers book of the month (and Pasadena's One City, One Book) called James (see announcement above). It's on Zoom this month due to the fires – due to the glitch **please everyone RSVP to get the Zoom Link**.
- **PP Ken Joe** announced that we will be soon nominating three at-large club members who will join a “Nominating Committee” that selects the new Rotary Board members for the new year – this keeps the board fresh and allows many to participate.
- **Bob Risley** gave a plea to anyone affected by the wildfires to hurry to complete Altadena Wildfire claims with the Red Cross and FEMA/ Army Corp. of Engineers.
- **Mike Bernard**, Chair of the Dan Stover Music contest, needs ushers to help during the auditions at Salvation Army Tabernacle on March 6th – they expect about 14 young musicians and almost 80 total attendees – parents, dignitaries, support musicians, etc.
- **Robert Lyons** introduced his guests, Pat Pattison and his daughter Lisa Pattison, of Pat Pattison's Best of California broadcast show (remember Deb Raupp's announcement last week

about the committee's formation to help local business impacted by the fires). Our newly formed Eaton Fire Relief Committee has partnered with Pat Pattison of Best of California to help sponsor the "Best of Altadena" a T-shirt fundraiser that directly helps beloved Altadena businesses. They will sell the shirts and keep all the proceeds. As our partner, Pat will be updating his audience about our efforts on his show and asking for help with ideas of service.

Now it was time to get to know your tablemates – Speed Rotary: An idea by **Deb Raupp** on how to meet new people at Rotary - When we entered today, we were asked to pick a random table number and sit with new folks and share two questions. I sat at a table led by **David McAlexander**, with Pat and Lisa Pattison, **Phyllis Mueller**, **Marsha Rood**, **Fred Fish**, and **Cyrus Afshin**. In ten minutes, we learned interesting facts about each other, and at the end we voted our Table 2 winning First Place (because we had so much fun).

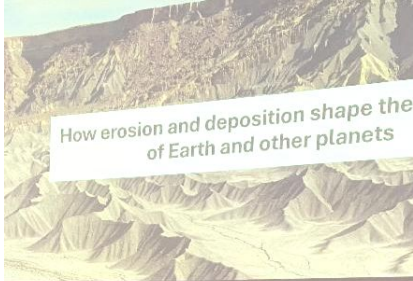


President Elect Hillary Schenk introduced our speaker today, Cal Tech professor of geology **Dr. Michael Lamb**, and his recent Caltech Watson Lecture on how wildfires shape our local mountains. He realized he had to condense his Caltech 90-minute lecture to just 30 Rotary minutes, but when he was done, we were fascinated by the science and the excellent research work done by he and his doctoral students on finding the patterns of wildfires, torrential rain, and devastating debris flows. We encourage you to watch the You Tube video in last week's **Spokes**.

Basically, when rain falls quickly on a steep soil-covered mountain which has been burned bare by fire, it loosens the soil and burnt material into a slurry, which then makes the perfect medium to carry huge boulders and tons of rocks in an avalanche of mud, all focused into a tight high-powered stream by the narrow walls of our local mountain passes and gullies. We watched a homeowner's video of a busy stream after a rainfall turn into a violent torrent of rising dark-brown sludge, stripping everything in its path, including the little garden bridge they had erected over the flood channel – we were worried the homeowner was soon to be swept away by the flood until Dr. Lamb told us it was a remote camera – it was obvious no one would have waited around to see if it would get worse – it was getting worse.



"The risk of potential debris flows is perhaps nowhere greater than in southern California" according to a study by Caltech, and we learned that in the last 115 years, there is a ten-year cycle of these Fire/Steep hills/High intensity rainfall events and that is what makes California unique and dangerous. And, no where else in the world is there such a combination of such steep



mountains (sea level to 8,000 feet elevation in such a short distance), such high fuel load due to our lush winter vegetation growth, and such high sudden downpours due to those “atmospheric rivers”, that the San Gabriel valley is always going to be this way.

Our San Gabriel mountains are growing one inch every 50 years, due to plate tectonics (“some of you in the room learned geology before plate tectonics was discovered”, he said, to groans and laughter from the audience – a geologist joke, we guess) and the dramatic erosion wears down the mountains by the exact same amount – one inch every 50 years. All that debris must go somewhere, and our city forefathers, and geologists, have constructed debris-flow basins at the foot of each potential flood channel, along with dams and holding ponds; and yet, we must empty them out every year via dump trucks to make room for the next debris flow events. Usually, its 20,000 dump trucks worth of debris per year, but when it’s a

post-fire year, it could be 400,000 dump truck trips.

He ended his presentation by showing a projection map of all the potential debris flows by area, and the capacity of the holding pond areas, and then extrapolated where there was the greatest mismatch that could lead to failure and disaster, and wouldn’t you know – it’s Sierra Madre dam, right behind **PP Mel Cohen’s** house!

President Stephen awarded Dr. Lamb with his magic mug, that turns hot coffee into our eternal thanks for a great presentation.

7 DAY NOTICE

Sneha Villalva - Sponsor: Howard Raff

HAPPY BIRTHDAY!!

Young Lee Hertig	March 2
Nat Read	March 2
Robert Lyons	March 6

HAPPY ROTAVERSARY

Rob Fisher	3/1/89	36 Years
Jim Graunke	3/1/85	40 Years
Edwin Hearst	3/1/76	49 Years
Robin Salzer	3/2/22	3 Years

UPCOMING PROGRAMS

March 12, 2025 - Dan Stover Instrumental Music Competition
March 19, 2025 - To Be Determined
March 26, 2025 - Alex Santamaria, President/CEO, LAist - The Future of LAist
April 2, 2025 - Ed Shorer, Slot Car Racing - Back to Being a Kid: How Slot Car Racing Brings Happiness
April 9, 2025 - Robert Kleinhertz, Kleinhertz Economics - The Economy of the San Gabriel Valley, What to Expect

SPOKES is the weekly newsletter published by the Rotary Club of Pasadena

Weekly Live Wednesday Meeting by RSVP
University Club Pasadena, 175 N. Oakland Ave.

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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, (President Elect Elect), Dede Venkat**

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

Rotary Club of Pasadena

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