
Rotary

Club of Pasadena, CA

SPOKES NEWSLETTER

DISTRICT 5300 * Rotary Club 794 * January 17, 2025 * #01-0053

www.pasadenarotary.com

SHEILA GUTIERREZ

"Finding Peace in Anxious Times"



With 30 years of experience as a Marriage and Family Therapist in private practice in Glendora, Sheila has dedicated her career to educating and supporting individuals, couples, and families through life's challenges.

Beyond private practice, Sheila served many years as a Critical Incident Debriefing – traveling to sites of tragedy to quickly help mitigate future mental health issues for survivors. Sheila is also a Mediator, working with small businesses and in Family Law Court to offer more peaceful resolutions to divorce and custody issues. She is designated as an Expert Witness in Family Law Court.

For a decade Sheila taught as an Adjunct Professor at the University of La Verne Graduate School of Psychology (where she also set a record for the longest amount of time it took a student to get a Bachelor's Degree – 13 years!!)

Sheila is a proud member of the Glendora Rotary Club for 27 years, a mom of 3 and Grammy to 8! PDG Roger and she have been married for "a very long time"!! And she is very happy to be here during this very difficult time to help us navigate the path to recovery.

WEDNESDAY – JANUARY 22, 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: Jonathan Edwards
Inspiration: Morgan Nadeau
Scout Zone Reporter: Dean Billman
Photographer: Tammy Silver
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

For those of you who were not able to attend our luncheon this past Wednesday, let me just say that it was an emotionally healing event. There are many that were affected by the Eaton fire, some more than others. I am aware of several Pasadena Rotarians who have lost their home. My heart goes out to them.

What has lifted my spirit during this recent cataclysmic event is seeing Nonprofits, Houses of Worship, numerous service clubs, and other establishments step up to the plate to help those affected. It reinforces my belief that there is indeed good in this world.

Many a propos past quotes come to mind. The one I like is "the darkest hour is just before dawn." There are indeed brighter days ahead. Our community has and will come together. Safer standards will be put in place. Smarter homes will be developed. Better means of fighting fires will be enacted.

As Albert Einstein once said, "In the middle of difficulty lies opportunity." The recovery process will take years. I know that we Rotarians will play a vital role in the in the redevelopment of our communities and I look forward to your participation.

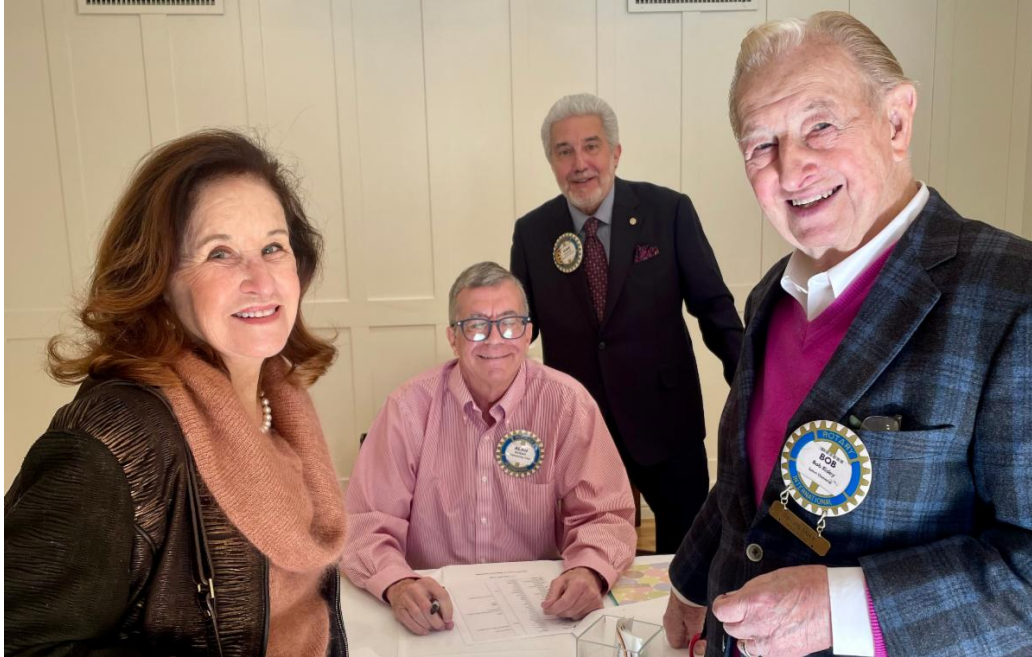
Stephen D. Smith
President 2024 - 2025
Rotary Club of Pasadena
Cell 310.908.1779

**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



PHOTOS OF THE WEEK

Deborah Lewis & Scott Vandrick - Yvonne Carlson, Naomi Hirahara & Scott Carlson



NEW NAME BADGES & BADGE BOX

You'll start to see our new members have a little smaller name badge and done in a different style.

Slowly our name badges will be changing according to Rotary International's new format.

If you receive one of the smaller badges, it gets



put in a separate box which Alan or Mike can direct you to.

ROTARY VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES & EVENTS

GIVE HELP – GET HELP!

As we watch in disbelief at the fires consuming our beautiful, vibrant community, our hearts go out to those who are evacuated and especially to those who have lost homes and businesses. Let us take a collective deep breath and do what Rotarians do best, be of service.

Let's come together and support each other. If you have any resources that may be of help to Rotarians in need, please let us know. If you are a Rotarian in need of anything: a place to stay, a place to share a snack with others for a few hours, a home to go to for a meal, clothes, food, anything at all, please let us know. For now, I will be the hub and will match Rotarian resources with Rotarian needs. Please email me at tamaramsilver@gmail.com or call or text me at 626-722-4272 with your resources or your needs.

Yours in Rotary Service,

Tammy Silver
President Elect-Elect



GARBIS DER-YEGHIAN 35TH ANNUAL PEACE Conference



Saturday, January 25, 2025

Registration Check-in/Continental Breakfast 8:00 a.m.

Conference Begins Promptly at 9:00 a.m.–12:00 p.m.

Richard Nixon Presidential Library and Museum

18001 Yorba Linda Blvd, Yorba Linda, CA

Keynote Speaker:

Helen Peacock

Rotary Action Group for Peace Board Member
Chair of Organizing Committee Ending War
101 Founder of Pivot2Peace
Positive Peace Ambassador for the Institute of Economics
and Peace and Justice Network
Chapter Coordinator for World BEYOND War
Distinguished peace advocate and speaker



Engaging Panel of Expert Panelists:



Helen Peacock
Our distinguished
Keynote Speaker



Joe "Peppy" Sciarra
Decorated World
War II Army
Veteran
66 year Rotarian



Paulette Britton
Founder of Autism
Legacy Fund
Rotarian
and Speaker



NJ Yazon
Marketing
professional
NAMI volunteer



Jennie Liang
Student
Engagement
Manager—Child
Mind Institute's
Youth Mental
Health Academy



Lee MacNaughton
ASU Student
NAMI Volunteer
and Intern

REGISTRATION IS NOW OPEN
(includes continental breakfast and a museum tour)

Early bird rates:

Adults: \$45 (\$50 at the door)
Students: \$20 (\$25 at the door)

To **REGISTER** and for more information, visit the event website at:
<http://district5300.org/peace-conference/>

Scan for
Event Page
and
Registration



Rotary District 5300
District Governor
Michael Driebe



Rotary District 5330
District Governor
Judy Zulfqar



Conference Chair and
Emcee
Rotary District 5330
Past District Governor
Jamie Zinn

The Scoot Zone

By Past President Mary Lou Byrne, Bureau Chief

Photos by Ken Joe & Tammy Silver



It was an emotional day as we came together after four weeks apart. There were lots of hugs and more than a few tears as we reconnected over lunch. After ringing the bell at 12:30, **President Stephen Smith** asked us to remain seated while he gave a short but beautiful statement expressing heartfelt sympathy to all those affected by the Eaton Fire and urging us all to come together and join in the recovery ahead.

Past President Mary Lou Byrne, accompanied by Ann Louise Christensen on the piano and the Four Way Test Singers (**Don Andruess, Allison Burgos, Phyllis Currie, Hillary Schenk, James Doyle, Gary Kearney, and Eric Olson**) led us in singing You've Got a Friend in Me, dedicated to everyone who had been displaced or suffered losses in the fire.

Hans Rosenberger gave the Inspiration, a poem by Maya Angelou called When Great Trees Fall: <https://poems.com/poem/when-great-trees-fall/> There were more than a few tears and a rousing round of applause at the end.



On a lighter note, we welcomed two new members today, both sponsored by **Past President Howard Raff**. **Nick Duretta** (*pictured right of President Stephen*) retired from a 45-year career in communications management and is now enjoying his second career as a writer of mystery novels. (This reporter read his first one, *A Deadly Walk in Devon*, and it's great! The second one is coming out next week.) Nick lives in Pasadena with his husband and is excited to get to know his fellow Rotarians. **Adam Kawasawa** (*pictured left*) (co-sponsored by **Curtis Smith**) is a third generation Angeleno and second-generation real estate broker with 18 years' experience. He is married to wife Tinna Yu and owns a brokerage in Pasadena called Flow Properties. Adam says he looks forward to being of service to the community as a member of the IMPACT Club.



Sergeant at Arms Robert Lyons helped with the guest introductions. Rotarians hosting guests this week were **Scott Carlson, Bob Risley, Mary Lou Byrne, Angie Pizano, and Pat Wright**. We also welcomed visiting Altadena Rotarian Mark Mariscal, who was in amazingly good spirits despite having just lost his home in last week's fire.

Announcements:

Helen Baatz, co-chair of Community Grants, announced that her committee has pivoted in light of recent events, and this year's area of focus is changing from veterans' services to fire relief. This announcement was greeted with a big round of applause.

George Ricciardella of Impact Drug & Alcohol Treatment Center shared that his facility has been evacuated and one of its sober living facilities has burned. However, he "celebrates their grace and resilience." And because of donations of gift cards from Pasadena Rotary, all 28 displaced people from the burned-out facility "have what they need." He recalled that early in his career as a fundraising professional he received a letter addressed to "Dear Kind Folk," and thanked the "kind folk" of Pasadena Rotary for their support.

Vivian Kambe of the Pasadena Community Foundation (PCF) announced that PCF established a Fire Relief Recovery Fund last week with \$100,000 seed money, and it's already grown to \$3.7 million. She expressed her thanks to everyone who has donated, urged others to consider donating, and commended PCF President **Jennifer DeVoll** for her tireless work in this time of crisis. More info here: <https://pasadenacf.org/supporting-our-community-eaton-canyon-fire-relief-recovery-fund/>

Dean Billman announced that his cousin in far-off Ohio is working with his Rotary District 6690 to send aid to the victims of the California fires. They are directing donations to the Wildfire Disaster Relief Funds for our own District 5300 <https://www.district5300.org/ca-wild-fires/> and also District 5280 (Los Angeles) <https://rotary5280.org/page/2025-wildfire-disaster-relief/> It's good to know our far-off Rotary friends have our backs!

And speaking of Rotary friends having our backs, **Past President Ken Hill** took the mic to acknowledge and thank former Pasadena Rotarian Mary Farley Bowser, who actually moved out of her house in Sierra Madre so that **Ken** and his wife Freddi could move in while they are evacuated from their (thankfully still standing) house in Altadena.

President Stephen also announced that our Rotary Board secretary unfortunately lost her home in the fire and has had to resign from the secretary position. We are looking for someone to fill the rest of the term (through June 30 of this year). Board meetings are at 5:00 p.m. on the third Thursday of the month and generally last for about an hour. Please contact President Stephen at president@pasadenarotary.com if you are interested in serving.

And in non-fire-related news, the 35th Annual Garbis Der-Yeghian Peace Conference will take place on Saturday, January 25 at the Richard Nixon Presidential Library. Details above.

After the announcements, we had a brief open mic session to discuss disaster-related issues.

Past President Mel Cohen, a longtime insurance professional, gave some good tips:

- There is a ban on any insurer from canceling your homeowner's policy and any notice you have received is void. Details here: <https://abc7.com/post/california-issues-temporary-ban-home-insurance-cancellations-palisades-eaton-fire-areas/15788773/>

- If you have been affected by the fire, Mel is available to review your insurance policy with you.
- After you are able to move back into your home in the fire area, or get access to your burned home, don't sign anything without getting advice from Mel or someone else who knows about disasters! And if you do sign a contract to rebuild, the maximum deposit is 1% of the price of \$10,000.
- Price gouging is illegal: Hotels and other essential services can only raise their prices by 10% in emergency situations.
- PCC has set up a Disaster Recovery Center at 3035 E. Foothill Blvd, the PCC Community Education Center. It will be open all week from 9 a.m. to 8 p.m.
<https://pasadena.edu/fireupdates/>
- Finally, Mel said, "I'm here to help, not to hustle."

Lisa Cavalier of the Pasadena Boys and Girls Club announced that the Boys and Girls Club never closed during the disaster. 49 client families, 2 staff members, and one board member have lost their homes, but they are staying open while the schools are closed. They are soliciting funds that will go directly to the families in need. The biggest need is not material goods like clothing, but gift cards to places like Target.

Mark Mariscal of Altadena Rotary commended the Pasadena Community Foundation which, he said, is "leading the charge" for relief in Altadena.

Scott Carlson introduced our speaker, prominent novelist Naomi Hirahara. (This reporter has read her books and they're great!). Naomi grew up in Altadena and has been friends with Scott's wife, Yvonne, since they were in junior high school. Naomi began by showing us a photo of her multi-racial, multi-ethnic third grade class at Loma Alta Elementary School in Altadena, and saying sadly, "I just found out my childhood home is gone. It's not the same as losing a current home, but it's a loss." She now lives in Pasadena but quoted Mayor Victor Gordo, who says of Altadena, Pasadena, and South Pasadena, "we're all Denas!"



The title of Naomi's talk was A Pasadena Girl Investigates, and she focused on Japanese culture in Pasadena. Despite the fact that Japanese/Japanese American citizens were interned during WWII, "Pasadena has embraced Japanese art and culture from the early 1900s."



One fascinating example: The Issei/Nisei float in the 1941 Rose Parade. The Japanese American community had a float with five princesses who were chosen from 1,000 applicants at a gala event in Pasadena. The Issei (first generation Japanese) wanted the princesses to wear kimonos. The Nisei (their children, the second generation) wanted them to wear Western evening gowns, which they thought would better harmonize with the float's depiction of Washington DC and its cherry blossoms (and a sign on the back saying "God Bless America"). The result? Two princesses in kimonos and three in evening gowns. And the float won the Theme Prize that year! Ironically, this was January 1, 1941, just under a year before the attack on Pearl Harbor and the detention of the Japanese in Pasadena.

Naomi then told us about Kenneth Masao Nishimoto. He was born in Tokyo in 1907 but came to the US to study architecture at USC. He led tours to Japan for his fellow architects, which influenced many of them including Whitney Smith, who designed the Tea House at Descanso Gardens.

Nishimoto was interned at the Gila River War Relocation Center in Arizona, but even from there he was able to collaborate with a USC classmate to organize the barracks. He even entered and

won third prize in a contest to design “the modern American home.” After the war he and his classmate designed homes in Pasadena and even worked on the Pasadena Public Library.

Finally, Naomi shared that her mother was from Hiroshima and was present when the atom bomb fell. Today, said Naomi, Hiroshima represents peace. Who knows, she asked, what Altadena will represent in the future? Something will be re-built. “This is a time for mourning, but I have a glimmer of hope that it doesn’t mean Altadena is gone [for good].”

After a short Q and A, Naomi raffled off copies of her books (lucky winners were **Scott Vandrick** and **Phyllis Mueller**), and we all left the meeting feeling grateful to have been together in these trying times.



L2R: George Falardeau, Mel Cohen, Mike Bernard, President Stephen, Helen Baatz, Deborah Lewis, Scott Vandrick, Yvonne Carlson, Naomi Hirahara, Scott Carlson

7 DAY NOTICE

Peggy Kelley - IMPACT CLUB - Sponsors: Mary Lou Byrne/Gary Kearney

HAPPY BIRTHDAY!!

Sandy Goodenough	Jan. 18
Jennifer DeVoll	Jan. 20
David McAlexander	Jan. 23

HAPPY ROTAVERSARY!!!

Jan Sanders	1/18/06	16 Years
Mike Davis	1/18/85	30 Years

Victor Gordo	1/20/21	4 Years
Janet Ramirez	1/22/24	1 Year

UPCOMING PROGRAMS

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

Feb. 5, 2025 - Jose Gomez, PCC President/Superintendent - The History & Future of PCC

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

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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: Sandy Goodenough

TREASURER: Tony Phillips

**CLUB DIRECTORS: Don Andruess, George Falardeau, Frank Fish, J.P. Harris, Debi Kroman,
Wende Lee, 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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