



HIGHLIGHTER

June 30, 2024



District Leaders
2023-24



Michael Soden
District Governor



Michael Driebe
District Gov-Elect



Gilda Moshir
District Gov-Nominee



Dennis Franklin
District Gov-Designate



Roger Gutierrez
IPDG



Karina Anderson
District Public Image Chair



Thomas Allison
District DEI Chair



Isaac Hung
Executive Assist Gov-CA West



Rae Kearney
Executive Assist Gov-CA East



Mark Mariscal
District Rotary Foundation Chair

EVENTS & REMINDERS

July 1st
[Lancaster West Demotion Party](#)

July 2nd
[San Dimas - Feed Heroes Committee Meeting](#)

July 3rd
[LaVerne - 4th of July Float-Decorate](#)

July 3rd

In this last edition of 2023-24

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Claremont Dunk Tank 10-2: Rotarian Brett O'Connor is Parade Master of Ceremonies

Covina 4th of July Community Celebration

LaVerne 4th of July Parade

Boulder City Pancake Breakfast

CLUB AND DISTRICT EVENTS AND REMINDERS (in left navigation bar)

DG Soden's 2023-24 Highlights

By DG Mike Soden

I have just returned home with a sense of fulfillment in my heart, having accomplished my final official duty as District Governor 2023-24. I had the pleasure of attending the 100-year anniversary of the Alhambra Club, an event that left a lasting imprint on me. The Alhambra and Monterey clubs recently announced their merger effective July 1, 2024; it will be known as the Rotary Club of Alhambra and Monterey Park. During the ceremony, President Greg Cheng of Alhambra and President Yvonne Ng of Monterey Park were called to the stage. I was honored to present them with their Past President's pins, a well-deserved recognition of their leadership.



Last night, I shared with the attendees the memorable weekend I spent with RI President Gordon McNally and his wife, Heather. The experience impressed upon me the importance of saying thank you and expressing gratitude, a value that has been reiterated by President Gordon in several speeches. As I sit down to pen my last article as District Governor, I am filled with gratitude and appreciation. I extend my heartfelt thank you to Sylvia Soden, my wife of almost 44 years, whose unwavering support and encouragement enabled me to fulfill my duties with utmost dedication and passion. I also extend my sincere gratitude to the members of District 5300 for their cooperation and tireless efforts in achieving our collective goals.

Together, we have accomplished many remarkable things that will inspire us for years to come, such as:

1. In the past year, our district has achieved remarkable growth, thanks to the addition of three new clubs: Aerospace Valley in Lancaster, Henderson After Hours in Henderson, and Vegas Verde in North Las Vegas.
2. As many of you may already be aware, one of my top priorities this year has been to contribute to the global efforts to eradicate polio. The cause is particularly dear to me, as my wife Sylvia is herself a survivor of this debilitating disease. By the end of the year, our district and its members will have donated more than \$110K towards polio eradication, a testament to our commitment to making a difference in the world.
3. To better showcase the meaningful work of our clubs and their service projects, we are proud to have launched a new website, [ComeSeeWhatWeDo.org](#). This program will feature social media outreach to folks in our community who are looking for opportunities to volunteer. They'll be directed to a site that lists Rotary clubs in District 5300 by geographic region. They can then click on a club in their area and learn about upcoming programs. If they register for a program your club is hosting, you'll be notified. We have kicked off a social media campaign to promote the site and its content. If you haven't already done so, please take a few moments to visit the website. We still need to update many clubs. Please don't hesitate to contact me to help you update your club area.
4. Despite the challenges posed by COVID and inclement weather over the past few years, both our TLC and RYLA programs have rebounded in a big way. For TLC, we brought in Sara Wells, a former Olympic runner from Canada, to shake things up and reinvigorate the program. Her presence was a huge success, and we are excited to see what other changes we can implement to continue to improve the program. After a gap of four years, we reinstated the Rotary Youth Leadership Awards (RYLA) program with immense success. The program exceeded our expectations by providing young leaders with practical knowledge, skills, and confidence to take on leadership roles and make a positive impact in both their personal and professional lives.
5. Finally, we were thrilled to host our first international District Conference, which drew over 200 attendees. This event was a

[SanDimas-Satellite Club of Military Family Support](#)

July 4th
[Boulder City Pancake Breakfast](#)

July 4th
[Covina July Fourth Community Celebration](#)

July 4th
[LaVerne 4th of July Parade](#)

July 4th
[Claremont - 4th of July dunk tank](#)

July 6th
[Altadena - Take Down Flags on Lake Avenue](#)

July 6th
[Altadena Concert Volunteers](#)

July 11th
[Las Vegas -- Wetzel Awards, Nellis Air Force Base](#)

July 13th
[LV Summerlin Sip & Savor](#)

July 13th
[Altadena - Concert Volunteers](#)

July 17th
[LV After Hours - Baby's Bounty Diaper Distribution](#)

July 19th
[Montebello Back Pack Distribution](#)

July 19th
[Henderson After Hours Charter Party](#)

July 20th
[LV After Hours - Prez Linda's Debunking](#)

July 20th
[Las Vegas Summerlin - Just One Pop Up Market](#)

July 20th
[Altadena Concert Volunteers](#)

July 25th
[LV Southwest Debunking](#)

July 27th
[Montebello-Whittier Blvd Festival and Beer Garden](#)

July 27th
[Altadena - Concert Volunteers](#)

Finally, we were invited to host our first international District Conference, which drew over 200 attendees. This event was a wonderful opportunity for Rotarians to come together, share ideas, and network with one another and with Rotarians in Mexico.

The Adventure (DC24: A Cruise to Service): On the sunny Friday afternoon of June 21st, the Royal Caribbean Navigator of the Seas sailed majestically away from the bustling port of Los Angeles. As we embarked on this adventure, we were greeted with a warm reception at 6 pm, followed by a scrumptious dinner at 8 pm. The much-awaited Saturday had finally arrived, and it was time for us to engage in invigorating conference. This event was adorned with a series of accolades for exceptional performance - our heartfelt congratulations go out to Las Vegas Summerlin (President - Steve Findley), West Covina (President - Lorraine Cardenas), and Las Vegas After Hours (President - Linda Bertuzzi), who brought home the coveted 'Clubs of the Year' awards. It was an honor to present our beloved PDG Tom Novotny with the prestigious 'Unsung Hero' award; a token of appreciation for his remarkable contributions to the district. We all acknowledge his unwavering dedication and commitment to making our district a better place. On the third day of our journey, we docked at the beautiful Ensenada port, where our members were enthralled by several impactful service projects supported by the local Rotary Clubs. To further expand our network and build stronger relationships, we shared lunch and spent quality time with six more local Rotary Clubs and established sister clubs with them. All in all, it was an unforgettable experience that will forever remain etched in our memories. I have added a photo gallery of our time on the Cruise. I am still adding images. <https://www.district5300.org/district-conference/>

As we reflect on the past year, I am pleased to announce that my primary objective of restoring a sense of normalcy within the district has been successfully achieved. With unwavering dedication, we executed all major programs to the best of our abilities, leaving no room for shortcomings. Throughout my interactions with the various club members, I reiterated the significance of maintaining consistent leadership for the continued progress and prosperity of both the district and individual clubs. My tenure as the district leader has been tremendously fulfilling, but I understand that the time has come to pass on the mantle to deserving successors, Mike and Sylvia (Yes, it is not a typo). In the past two years, Mike and I have worked diligently hand-in-hand, sharing our expertise in various training programs and aligning our thoughts on crucial aspects that keep the district running smoothly. Similarly, my regular meetings with DGE Gilda and DGN Dennis have been fruitful, shaping the future of the district. I am certain that these meetings will continue for many more months to come, strengthening the foundation we have built.

I extend my heartfelt wishes for an unforgettable journey to Mike and Sylvia Driebe. Embarking on this new adventure is a chance to create lifelong memories and discover new possibilities. The excitement of exploring uncharted territories and encountering diverse cultures is truly exhilarating. Such a journey can broaden one's horizons, enrich one's perspective, and foster personal growth. I am thrilled for Mike and Sylvia and can only imagine the remarkable experiences they will encounter. It is sure to be an adventure of a lifetime that they will cherish forever.

PS: As I conclude this article, I would like to extend my profound gratitude to Buff Wright for her exceptional efforts as the newsletter editor throughout the year. She has not only exceeded my initial expectations, but has also applied her creative skills to enhance the vision I had in mind. Buff's dedication and commitment to producing the best quality newsletter has not gone unnoticed. Her editorial choices and the way in which she has expertly crafted each edition has truly made a difference. I am forever grateful for her contributions, which have not only made the newsletter more interesting to readers, but also more accessible and enjoyable. Once again, thank you, Buff, for your outstanding work and commitment.

Reflections and Projections

By 2024-25 DG Michael Driebe

Iâ€™m writing this with just a few hours before my term as your District Governor begins. I am excited and honored to serve you and confident we can build on the success of the 2023-2024 year. I want to thank Mike Soden and his leadership team for the hard work and careful planning. From TLC to Presidentsâ€™ Advance, and from RYLA to an amazing District Conference onboard the Navigator of the Seas, it was a remarkable year. In addition, District 5300 has experienced positive membership growth for the first time in 7 years and we should all be proud of the work done to make that a reality. Letâ€™s continue to make our clubs the best they can be in order to better serve our communities and those in need.

To that end, we'll continue to work to promote mental health and fight polio in the year ahead. I also want to **raise awareness about human trafficking** and provide care for its victims. In fact, **thereâ€™s an opportunity to help this week**. If you live near the Los Angeles County Fairgrounds, weâ€™ll have a Human Trafficking awareness trailer set up for the 4th of July Kaboom! event. If youâ€™d like to lend a hand, please [contact me asap](#) and Iâ€™ll get you signed up for a 2-hour shift between 4:00 and 10:00 p.m. Thereâ€™s another opportunity next spring when we'll send a Vocational Training Team to Western Australia to share what we are doing in Southern California and Nevada to address this horrific problem.

The district will also work to raise awareness about Rotary. Over the years, Iâ€™ve often heard members say, "Why doesn't Rotary do more to promote itself and help us get new members?" Thanks to the groundwork laid by Mike Soden, we will launch comeseewhatwedo.org this month.

Of course, our traditional district programs for youth will continue. TLC, RYLA, George Hensel Ethics Essay Contest, 4-Way Test Speech Contest, and Dan Stover Music Contest are all in the works and I hope your club will embrace and promote them to the young people in your community. If you haven't participated in these programs in the past, find a way to get involved. The energy, talent and enthusiasm of the youth involved will amaze you. Go into the District section of DACdb and you'll find the chairs of these committees, ready to tell you more about their programs and how you can help.

Other district sponsored and supported programs include Global Scholarships, Global Grants, District Grants, a Rotoplast mission to Uganda in the early summer of 2025, a Rotary Friendship Exchange to India in January, the Rotary Rose Parade Float, and four Rotary Leadership Institute sessions with two in Southern California and two in Nevada. Weâ€™re also arranging a multi-district Rotary Foundation Dinner, as well as a multi-district Presidentsâ€™ Advance.

So, what do you do after another wonderful year of Rotary? Why, go to Disneyland of course! Thatâ€™s right, the 2025 District Conference will be held at the Disneyland Hotel on April 12th in partnership with District 5180 which will attend from Sacramento. The

day before will be the District Training Assembly and the day following will be a day to celebrate the **magic of Rotary** in the Magic Kingdom with discounted admission tickets to the park!

In the meantime, I look forward to visiting each of your clubs and to providing you with the encouragement and resources needed to increase your impact, expand your reach, enhance engagement, and increase your ability to adapt. We're on our way to another successful year and I'm excited to be on the journey with you!

Our Amazing, Generous District

By Mark Mariscal, 2021-24 District Rotary Foundation Committee Chair

This weekend brings to a close my volunteer position as the District Rotary Foundation Committee Chair (DRFCC). PDG Luanne Arredondo starts on July 1st. The three years providing advice, service, assistance and guidance to the Club leaders and members will be something I will cherish. Our rotary district has terrific club projects and people.

These last 12 months produced FOUR Global Scholars. These are young people sponsored by our Rotary Clubs who will be studying in foreign countries with scholarships averaging \$32,000. Their names, area of focus, university and club sponsors are: Ethan Wang - Disease Prevention and Treatment, University College London (UK) San Marino RC (See article below); Richa Prickh - Peace Building and Conflict Prevention, University of Auckland (NZ), Pasadena RC; Tallon Donine - Peace Building and Conflict Prevention, University of Edinburgh, Scotland, Pasadena RC; Zia Saylor - Economic Development, University of Bristol, Altadena RC

My time spent visiting clubs and members created many memories for me. I thank each and every one of you who reached out during these last three years to ask questions and more importantly, to share your "Rotary Stories". We all have stories and I heard many around the theme of WHY people give to The Rotary Foundation. These stories inspired my work. I was proud to share many of these stories (with permission) at talks given around the district.

I close by saying thank you to the team of DRFCC volunteers who worked directly with me over the last three years. They are: Christine Smith, Paul Reyes, Dean Billman, Bill Payne, PDG Margaret Cooker, PDG Michael Driebe, PDG Shab El Awar, Dawn Smith and unofficial team member, Tom Novotny.

2027-28 District Governor Applications accepted through August 1

By PDG John Chase

District 5300 is seeking applicants for 2027-2028 District Governor. Choosing our future leadership is one of the most important decisions we make in our District.

Qualifications for Candidacy and **Duties of the Governor** are listed in the Code of Policies, and the Manual of Procedures. At a minimum, the applicant must have served as a club president and been a Rotarian for at least seven years **by June 30, 2027**.

If you have or know someone who has a demonstrated history of proven leadership as a Rotarian, and would be willing to serve, then we are seeking to use that talent, skill and sound judgment in service as our District Governor for the 2027-2028 Rotary year.

A cover letter from the member's club must be attached with the application form stating why the candidate is interested in serving, including a resume that includes a progression of leadership roles, especially placing emphasis on Rotary District Leadership. Please note that the candidate's Club Secretary must sign the application form.

Date of Interviews: August 10th, 2024, beginning at 9 a.m.
Qualified candidates will be notified of the time of their interview.
Location: to be announced

Applications are available on the district website and may be submitted anytime between now and **August 1, 2024** via U.S Mail or email to John Chase. Additional information can be found at <https://www.district5300.org/districtgovernornomination/>

MEMBERSHIP MINUTES

By Gilda Moshir, 2023-24 District Membership Chair

Kathy Selders, longtime member of the South Pasadena Rotary club, shares how their club has fared with Corporate memberships below. Buff Wright from the Claremont Club adds their Family Membership into the mix. If your club does not currently have a Corporate or Family membership designation, reach out to our Membership Committee and we'd be happy to share how they work.

Have you bookmarked the District website on your computer? We now have a Membership Resources tab you can peruse to learn about various membership types. Bookmark the [D5300 website](#) and our [Membership Resources tab](#) now!

It has been my pleasure to serve as your District Membership Chair this past year. On July 1, 2024, Dennis Franklin will cross over to become your District Governor Nominee who will also become the Chair of the District Membership Committee. I will cross over and become your District Governor Elect and will continue serving on the committee to continue what we started this year.

Kathy Selders, South Pasadena

Corporate Membership helped the South Pasadena Club to attract a potential member who was a co-owner of a company with a current member. It served as a sort of gateway to membership! The potential member attended events and was involved in service projects but hesitated to become a member. The Corporate Membership with flexible membership requirements allowed her and her company to be members without the expense and full commitment of an individual membership. Once she was involved as a Corporate Member, she saw the value of being an official member and eventually was willing to transfer to an individual membership. She went on to be a two-time president. The Corporate Membership allowed her to ease into it!

Buff Wright, Claremont

The Claremont Club's Corporate Membership allows several corporate Associates for each primary corporate member. The primary member pays a third of regular active membership dues for each associate. Family Associate memberships work much the same way. Both have garnered several younger members who have stepped up and will sustain the club into the future. All associates are full members of the Club.

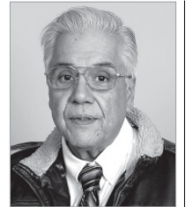
CLUB HIGHLIGHTS

Azusa Rotarian Peter Romero Honored

By Roger Gutierrez, IPDG and PP Azusa Rotary

The May 22, 2024 **Wall Street Journal** included a piece on selected honorees among the 2024 *Who's Who of Distinguished Leaders*. Of the 1.5 million Who's Who listees, only a small number are recognized with the Distinguished Leaders honor annually. This article included **Azusa Rotary Club member Peter Romero** as a recipient of this Honor, along with eleven others across the country in a variety of fields.

We applaud Peter for receiving this recognition!



Peter Romero, MEd
Founder, CEO
www.LeonardosApprentice.org

Who's Who of Distinguished Leaders: 2024 Honorees

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LV After Hours: Six New Paul Harris Fellows & Governor's Bell for Best Small Club!

By Linda Bertuzzi, 23-24 Prez/Co-founder, Las Vegas After Hours Rotary Club

Thanks in part to the generous gift of 500 points to new Paul Harris Fellows from District 5300, along with 250 points from President Linda Bertuzzi, we inducted SIX new Paul Harris fellows, honored our first Major Donor and celebrated two Paul Harris +2. Congratulations to new Fellows Renato Ritter, Evelyn Frese, Julie Stemple, Dawn Reese, Eugene Maresh and our Project 150 community partner/honorary member Stacy Chapter! Cheers to Pres/Co-founder Linda for her Major Donor recognition and to Pres-Elect Cat Brame & Past Pres. Terry Zakanycz for achieving PH + 2. These accomplishments require financial commitments from our members that result in dollars coming back to our Club from Rotary and the District to fund our service projects.

AND, this bulletin just in, our Club was recognized as the Best Small Club for 2023-24, winning the Governor's Bell at District Assembly! This is a testament to the hard work and commitment of our members to Service Above Self. Way to go Las Vegas After Hours Rotary Club!!!



A Walk in the Park--Las Vegas Clubs Clean Up!

By Christine Smith, Las Vegas Rotary

The morning of June 1, nine Nevada Rotary Clubs, three Rotary Youth Exchange students, and close to 50 Rotarians met early to beat the heat at Rotary Park in central Las Vegas to collect litter, paint curbs, rake planter beds, and generally beautify the park for all who use it. We even had a few dignitaries join in the fun. District Governor Mike Soden and Las Vegas City Councilman Brian Knudsen got down to work with the rest of us. District Governor Mike remarked, "The event was truly a memorable experience. It was heartening to witness the collaborative efforts of individuals making a positive impact. Joint projects like this embody the core values of Rotary and reinforce the belief that unity is strength. Fellowship, which lies at the very heart of Rotary, plays a pivotal role in promoting long-lasting bonds that transcend borders and cultures and fosters the spirit of community service."

Many of us had no idea there was a Rotary Park in Las Vegas. A tree in the park dedicated in 2003-2004 to Past District Governor Joe Buckley (1985-86) was rededicated in 2024 along with The Paul Harris Fellowship Tree originally dedicated in 1982-83 by the Rotary Clubs of Las Vegas, Moapa, and Caliente.

Thanks to the Las Vegas Rotary Club and Greg Maguire, its Director of Fellowship, for organizing a wonderful fellowship event. Rotarians from Moapa even made the trek to join in the effort. What a delight to catch up with fellow Rotarians we had not seen in a long time. We can't wait to gather again next spring!



Mesquite Two Rotary Clubs Merge for Greater Impact

By Deb Parsley, President Rotary Club of Mesquite NV

The Rotary Club of Mesquite NV Noon and the Mesquite NV Sunrise Rotary Club are excited to announce we are working on a merger between the two local clubs! The new Club will be named "Rotary Club of Mesquite NV." The original charter will stay in effect, which is 1997, and we will continue our "Service" to Mesquite, Beaver Dam, and the surrounding areas. The new club meets weekly on Wednesdays at 5:30 pm at the Mesquite NV Library. The completion of the merger will be official July 1, 2024.

The Club will continue to practice "Service above Self" by giving back to our community through service and philanthropy in support of local and international projects. Recently, the clubs sent Virgin Valley High School students to RYLA, Rotary Youth Leadership Camp. We also provided donations to the Mesquite STEAM Center for their Drone program and Lego table. Service Projects and Fundraising will continue to help us accomplish our mission of giving back to Mesquite. Additionally, we host a monthly used book sale at the College of Southern Nevada, and 100% of those funds go directly to the Mesquite Reads Program in partnership with the Eureka Community Initiative Program.

Rotary Club of Mesquite, NV, is twenty-four members strong. New officers starting July 1, 2024, are Deb Parsley, President; Melissa Engvil, Secretary; Darlene Montague, Treasurer; Joe Sologub, Sgt. at Arms; Jake Noll, Past President; Chantile McAllister, PR and Sharon



Rae, Guest Speaker Committee.

Student Wins San Marino Rotary Scholarship for University College London

By William L. Payne, Chair Global Grants, Scholar and Peace, Rotary Club of San Marino

Rotary International has announced that San Marino High School Class of 2020 graduate, Ethan B. Wang, has received a Global Grant Scholarship for study towards a Master of Science in Population Health at the Institute of Epidemiology and Health Care at University College London beginning this September. He plans to study ways to evaluate, develop, and lead research-based health initiatives in the field at the intersection of health and technology from a perspective in the United Kingdom. His interests align with Rotary's *Disease Prevention and Treatment* area of focus. The scholarship has a value of \$33,400.

During high school, Wang was a cabinet member of the Rotary Interact Club and volunteered with the organization in San Marino's 4th of July Parade, later being awarded the Barth Rotary Scholarship of \$2,500 as a high school graduate.

He graduated from Johns Hopkins University in 2023 as a Woodrow Wilson Fellow, after only seven semesters, with a double major in Public Health Studies and Natural Sciences Area (Biology). While in Baltimore, he was involved with several organizations including TechUp USA, Baltimore CONNECT, Cochlear Center for Hearing and Public Health, and Code in the Schools.

His host is the Kingsbury & Kenton Rotary Club, in District 1130. It is expected that Ethan will speak at various club meetings, attend their district conference, and generally be a resource to Rotarians and their programs while abroad. Upon his return, Ethan will be the keynote speaker at San Marino's annual Foundation Luncheon at the Huntington in March, giving a recount of his academic and social activities while abroad.



Las Vegas WON Global Grant Help

By Chehab El Awar, Las Vegas WON

Las Vegas Won completed over 14 global grants this year and has many in draft mode that we can help other clubs to adopt and assist with completing the grant. The picture at right is a health bus supported through a global grant this year. Please search for District 5300 grants and projects at [matchinggrants.org](https://www.matchinggrants.org)



We also organized service projects at our conference in Ensenada, which resulted in adopting two global grants begun by sister clubs in Mexico.

--Mental Health Initiative (filed). GG-2466542

--Prosthetic legs 3D Printing GG2466661

Please contact me or DG Michael Driebe for information about how to get involved. Honored and humbled to be able to serve humanity together.