



'SPARKS' OFF THE ROTARY WHEEL

An Award-Winning Newsletter

Edited by Sarah O'Brien

**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: Stephanie Urchick, Dist. 5300 Gov: Michael Driebe



FEBRUARY 20, 2025



February is:

**Peace-building and
Conflict Prevention/Resolution**

Officers

President: Maricela Viramontes
Vice President: Dawn Digrius Smith
President Elect: Brad Roeber

Treasurer: Mike Noll
Bus: 626-657-2287
Secretary: James Gorton
Bus: 626-793-6215

Directors

Craig Cox
Maria Perez-Arton
Mark Mariscal
Sarah O'Brien
Lisa Rickard
Doug Colliflower
Brad Roeber

Chairs

Executive Club Secretary: Mark Mariscal
Membership: Maria Perez-Arton
& Brad Roeber
Foundation: Steve Kerekes
Service Projects: Mike Zoeller

Subcommittees

Community Service: Craig Cox
Vocational Service: Steve Kerekes
Youth Contests, Scholarships, Awards: Mike Zoeller
Youth Activities: Tony Hill
International Service: Sarah O'Brien

THIS WEEK: MAJOR GENERAL JASON KELLY

Westminster Presbyterian Church 12.00 - 1:30 pm



Major General Jason E. Kelly assumed duties as the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Deputy Commanding General for Civil and Emergency Operations on September 9, 2024, after most recently serving as the 53rd Commanding General of the U.S. Army Training Center and Fort Jackson, the U.S. Army's main production center for Basic Combat Training. The installation trains roughly 50 percent of all

Soldiers and more than 60 percent of women entering the Army each year. In addition to basic combat training, more than 24,000 Soldiers graduate each year from other Fort Jackson schools and courses, such as the Drill Sergeant Academy, U.S. Army Institute of Religious Leadership, the Adjutant General School, Finance School, and Noncommissioned Officer Academy.

Major General Kelly, a native of Flint, Michigan, attended the U.S. Military Academy at West Point, New York, and graduated in 1994 with a commission as an engineer officer.

Major General Kelly holds a bachelor's degree in mathematics from West Point, and master's degrees in engineering management from the



Missouri University of Science and Technology, in statistics from the Georgia Institute of Technology, in Joint Campaign Planning and Strategy from the National Defense University and in Strategic Studies from the U.S. Army War College. By Peter Huisking



<https://www.ecsforseniors.org/montecedro/>

LAST WEEK: MEGAN SPEAKS FROM THE HEART

Review by Mark Mariscal



Our speaker last week, Rev. Megan Katerjian or Rev. Megan K., as she is known, shared a few stories that can easily melt your heart. Let us start with the fact that Megan serves as the CEO of a local Pasadena-based Non-Profit organization 'Door of Hope'. The mission of DOH is to Empower Families facing homelessness to transform their lives.

Joining Megan was one of her staff, Ms. Emily Abbott. Both Emily and Megan lost their homes in the fire. I had a few minutes to say hello and check in with Megan at the start of our meeting. Although she was happy to be able to come and speak to us, she did admit that the last few weeks have been rough going. We can all relate to that!

When the program started, Megan focused on what her organization did in the arena of ending homelessness. But her own family situation has now changed in the aftermath of the Eaton fire - so that she could be described as 'homeless'. The empowerment of understanding firsthand what hundreds of her clients over the years have faced, struck her hard. She knew that she had to take care of herself first, before trying to move forward the organization. She mentioned that her staff stepped up to handle the day to day operations in the weeks following the fire, and they managed to keep things moving. That gave her comfort in the fact that she could focus on her own family. She mentioned that she loves the local Altadena institutions, including Altadena Library. While there was sadness in her story, there was also hope. Thus, the reason why Door of Hope will continue to empower and change people's lives over the next 20+ years and then some.

<https://doorofhope.us/>



Jacque's Cat Sculpture - a survivor!

CLUB MEMBERS WHO LOST THEIR HOMES TO THE EATON FIRE:

Maricela

Lisa

Dawn

Mark

Rene

Sue

Carol

(Sue's sister and friend of Rotary)

Linda C.

Wendy

Lauren

Frank - prospective new member

Tony

Sarah

Roger Fennell

Dennis McGinley

Former member

David Smith lost his place of business (carpenter shop)

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

By President Maricela



On Friday, Mark Mariscal and I will be attending the President-Elect Training Seminar (PETS) near LAX. We will be speaking to just over 500 rotary members from around the Southwest part of the United States. These club members who are preparing to become their Club Presidents on July 1st represent more than 500 clubs. Our own Brad Roeber will be in attendance. Mark and I are speaking after lunch in a seminar about the effects on the club of the recent fires. As we all know, the road to recovery, rebuilding and rejoicing is a long one.

Last Sunday, I rode an electric bike for the first time. My daughter Daniela, Mark and I were invited guests to a Mountain Bike event that had raised funds for our Rotary Charities account, totalling more than \$1,500. All of this stemmed from one person's idea in the North East Orange County Leadership Club (NOEC). From there, club member Stefenie Huynh jumped into action! She found out that her co-worker had a first cousin who was married to an active rotarian in Altadena. Of course it had to be "our Mark". From there, the two of them connected at the District 5300 Peace Conference in Loma Linda where Mark promised to attend and give a little speech about what our club had done to date, with fundraising for the Eaton Fire recovery efforts. Of course he dragged me down to Fullerton - to a beautiful park with a very nice bike path. I loved it, as did Daniela!



As my husband and I continue to talk about the road to recovery, we are starting to make decisions on how the reconstruction might go. We want more space and will probably move forward with plans to enlarge our house by more than the 10% limits that are imposed that allow for a speedy (and easier supposedly) permit process. I share this because it is important for all of us who lost homes to truly think about what life will be like again in Altadena in 3-5 years. And remember, our club is one of the local organizations that are

NEW MEMBERS INSTALLED!



Last Thursday, our club installed Frank Mayor and Peter Huisking (L to R), as members. This is Frank's first time being in Rotary. His wife Huan Gu is active with Altadena Heritage. Peter transferred from a club in Tucson, AZ. His wife Henrietta (Hank) is a member of the Sierra Madre Rotary Club. *Pictured with membership chair Maria, and President Maricela.*

WELCOME ALL!

LAST WEEK AT THE CLUB...



Emily Abbott (Door of Hope) and Tom Polenzani

smack in the middle of rebuilding and restoring Altadena through our Altadena Rotary Charities Foundation. I mentioned last week that club member Lisa Rickard has agreed to chair our newest committee called "Restore Altadena".

It is a big task and important to stay focused. She will do a terrific job!

Many of you have spoken to me about your own road to recovery. I want to thank you for sharing. It helps me and I am sure it probably helps you too. Some have said it before, and I will do so again: being a receiver of assistance instead of a giver is hard. But my family and I have learned to say thank you with a smile, and we really mean it. The love and support our club has witnessed from donors and well wishers is something I have never experienced. Some of us have cried together about our situations. We will continue to be strong for our families and community. Remember, Rotary embodies "Service Above Self".

Finally, in keeping with the spirit of service, our next Day of Service will be another Rotary-sponsored Community Give Away program on Saturday, March 15th in the parking lot of Grocery Outlet. More to come.

See you on Thursday - stay strong!

Dear Altadena and Bristol Rotarians!



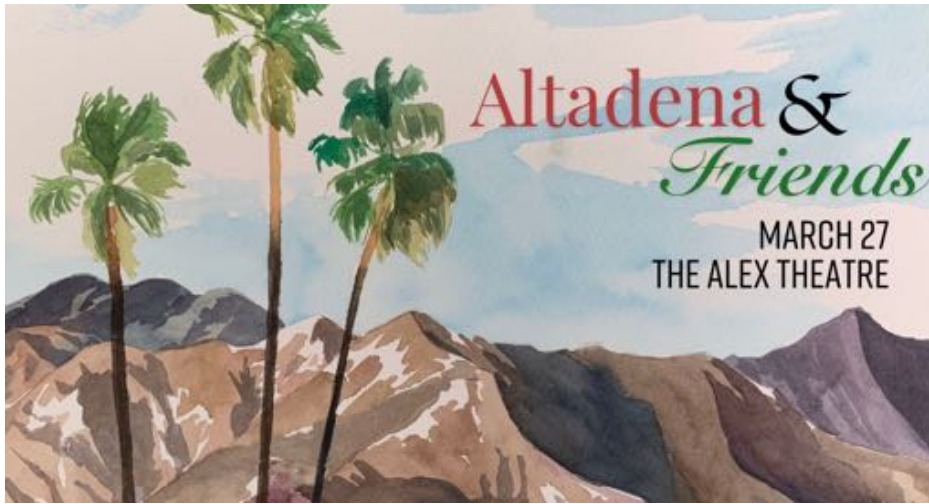
I was honored to join Bristol Rotary (UK) in their meeting recently. I delivered to the Club President the kind gift from Altadena Rotary - our centennial scarf - and said a few words about what has happened to our Altadena community, as well as the wonderful leadership our club has demonstrated at this time of great need. Speaking to the Club President (*pictured above*), it does sound as though Bristol Rotarians hope to support Altadena Rotary's efforts.



I was heartened by a lovely evening of fellowship with Bristol Rotary and truly am beyond proud of all the work Altadena Rotary has done. Helping others when experiencing loss and hardship is truly the highest form of selflessness, community spirit, and Rotary values.



Mark Mariscal with DG Chris and DGE Craig from District 5320 in O.C



https://feverup.com/m/300309?utm_source=landing&utm_medium=partner&utm_campaign=300309_lax&utm_term=33379

Details to follow or contact ZOOT zoot@4m-pact.com

My heart as always is home in California. My mother and dogs have preemptively left the area (she was with friends) due to mudslide concerns with the incoming storm, and I hope you all are also staying safe with the incoming rain.

Please keep me updated as more opportunities for supporting our home community arise. I hope to be returning at some point this year before Christmas but our house currently isn't habitable so that may take a while.

Best, Zia

**Zia Saylor,
Rotary Global Scholar
& Fulbright Scholar**

Below: Zia with the District Governor of District 1220 at last month's meeting of the Wollaton Park Rotary, UK, during a stay with Rtn Chris O'Brien and Dot in Nottingham. More to follow!



FIRE RELIEF / DONATIONS TO ALTADENA ROTARY CHARITIES By Diana Yang

REMINDER: In times of crisis, community unites. That has never been more apparent than in the past month as demonstrated by our community of beautiful Altadena and beyond.

Donations have poured in locally and from abroad in support of those who have been impacted by the devastating Eaton fires. In an effort to streamline this process going forward, all future giving to the Eaton Fire Recovery Fund should be directed to the following link: <https://givebutter.com/EatonFireARC>.

Givebutter is a free online platform that helps non-profit organizations manage donors and donations and makes giving even easier by streamlining all donations to one single page. From the site, you can donate via credit card/debit card, Apple Pay, Venmo, Paypal and Check. This link should soon be available on our website, dacdb and social media. Please spread the word and please give our sincere thanks to those who have already given and are aiding in the process of rebuilding our community.

