



'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



MARCH 27, 2025

March is: Water, Sanitation and Hygiene month

THIS WEEK: GARY ANDERSON

Public Information Officer for the Office of Disaster Recovery and Resilience

**Westminster Presbyterian Church 12.00 - 1:30 pm
 1757 N Lake Ave, Pasadena, CA 91104**



U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA)'s Office of Disaster Recovery and Resilience is currently in Los Angeles County as a result of the major disaster declaration approved by President Biden on January 8, 2025. The declaration covers Los Angeles and the contiguous counties of Kern, Orange, San Bernardino, and Ventura due to wildfires and straight-line winds that began Jan. 7, 2025. SBA's disaster loans

are available to homeowners, renters, businesses and nonprofits who sustained damages as a result of the wildfires.

SBA disaster loans are the primary source of federal assistance to help private property owners pay for losses not covered by insurance or other recoveries. Loans are available to businesses of all sizes and PNP organizations to repair or replace damaged or destroyed real estate, machinery, equipment, inventory, and other business assets.

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

The SBA also offers Economic Injury Disaster Loans (EIDLs) to small businesses, small agricultural cooperatives, small businesses engaged in aquaculture, and most PNP organizations to help meet working capital needs caused by the disaster, even if there is no physical damage. EIDLs may be used to pay fixed debts, payroll, accounts payable, and other expenses that would have been met if not for the disaster. Businesses can apply for loans of up to \$2 million.

Disaster loans of up to \$500,000 are available to homeowners to repair or replace damaged or destroyed real estate. Homeowners and renters also are eligible for up to \$100,000 to repair or replace damaged or destroyed personal property, including personal vehicles.

Interest rates can be as low as 4% for businesses, 3.625% for PNP organizations, and 2.563% for homeowners and renters, with terms up to 30 years. Loan amounts and terms are set by the SBA and based on each applicant's financial condition. Interest does not begin to accrue until 12 months from the date of the first disaster loan disbursement and loan repayment can be deferred 12 months from the date of the first disbursement.



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

Tony

Sarah

Roger Fennell

Dennis McGinley

Former member

David Smith lost his place of business (carpenter shop)

LAST WEEK: KENI ARTS

Review by Deb Halberstadt



Keni Arts was working on a Star Trek episode at Paramount as a set painter on 9/11/01. News of the World Trade Towers attack spread quickly among the crew. The set was then closed for a prolonged period so Keni decided he would pursue his art "en plein air" (open air), or more prosaically, painting outside. He just had to paint.

Keni biked to the southeast corner of Lincoln and Woodbury and painted an image of Jim's Burger. There he was approached by students, one of whom told him she would follow the plans God had for her. This inspired Keni to follow his dreams and, through his painting, to document Altadena and meet his neighbors.

He continued telling his story on January 7 and 8 of this year during the Eaton Fire. Like many of us, he evacuated his West Altadena family including his daughter who lived in a separate home, after seeing that the fire was probably at Zorthian's ranch atop Fair Oaks.

Fire Relief Resources:

<https://www.altadenalibrary.org/news/emergency-resources>

<https://sd25.senate.ca.gov/eaton-wildfire-resources>

<https://altadenatowncouncil.org/2025/01/information-resources-eat-on-fire/>

On January 9 he hiked all over Altadena, confirming that their homes were gone, and hugging his neighbors who were also suffering losses. He noticed that Bob Lucas Library was still standing despite being under construction. He walked over to the Altadena Library and was happy to see the place that had welcomed him so many times was intact.

Keni related his NBC News interview on January 10 wherein he emphasized four points: Altadena is about community; it is a creative space; has a thriving Black population that owns homes and businesses; and Altadena has a fair and compassionate white population with no redlining.

Lastly, he described his most recent adventure painting the Davies Building at Farnsworth Park.



www.keniarts.com

Chronic Devastation

A Reflection by Victoria Knapp

Altadena Town Council



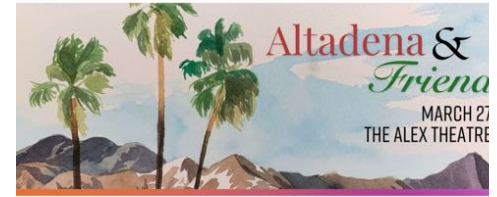
Now, at almost 11 weeks in, I have finally been able to better define what I'm suffering from, dealing with the catastrophic aftermath of the fire: **Chronic Devastation.**

While I am doing mostly ok - I am functional and attending to my and our lives - something has fundamentally changed at the core of who I am. I've previously described it as the crushing weight of sadness and overwhelm, and, while those are

both true, that's never seemed to get at the root of how I am feeling.

And, in parsing that out over these 11 weeks, in the 150 public meetings and events I've attended, in my private discussions with agencies and fire survivors (both of our fire and of other fires), and in my

FIRE RELIEF CONCERT March 27



Altadena & Friends Fire Relief Concert
The Eaton Fire devastated homes, businesses, and cultural landmarks, but our community is coming together to rebuild. Join us at the Alex Theatre on Thursday, March 27, for a 90-minute variety show featuring an extraordinary lineup of artists from the affected areas. 75% of funds raised go to Altadena Rotary Charities, and 25% go to the Altadena Town Council.
Host a LiveStream party with your friends!
TICKETS ON SALE NOW!
(USE THE QR CODE)

Restore ALTADENA GRANT PROGRAM

NOW ACCEPTING APPLICATIONS

For 501(c) Nonprofit Organizations
Grants available: \$500 - \$5,000
Supporting community projects aiding Eaton Fire recovery

First Deadline: March 31, 2025

- Projects must benefit Altadena residents, businesses, or services
- Nonprofits may sponsor projects for individuals, businesses, or local government

GET STARTED AT ALTADENAROTARY.ORG

Altadena Rotary

Attention 501(c) Nonprofit Organizations:

The Rotary Club of Altadena is now accepting applications for the Restore Altadena Grant Program, offering \$500 to \$5,000 in funding to support community projects that aid in Eaton Fire recovery efforts.

Who can apply?

- 501(c) nonprofit organizations
- Projects benefiting Altadena residents, businesses, services, and charities affected by the Eaton Fire
- Organizations may sponsor projects by individuals, businesses, or local government

First application deadline: March 31, 2025

Apply now:

<https://altadenarotary.org/?p=stories&storyid=287709>

conversations with my closest friends, what I'm truly experiencing is chronic devastation.

Unlike even the sudden trauma from the passing of a loved one that ebbs and flows with the current of the grief cycle, this is abiding and unending. The knowledge of all that's been lost, for us and for others, for our unique and feral community, combined with the fading vestiges of life pre-January 7th, 2025, of the long, complicated, and fraught road to rebuilding, never mind recovering (which I suspect will take the remainder of my life), that devastation lives in me now.

And, in taking up space in my psyche, it has robbed me of any remaining naivete, or innocence, or even the mindless busyness of life. It is a black weight, co-existing in my soul.

Others living through this nightmare will likely relate. It should be it's own psychological disorder in the DSM-5: Chronic Devastation Disorder.

There are no platitudes or reassurance that alleviate this trauma response. There is no introspection or self-awareness, or even self-care that's a salve.

There is no way around, only through.



The Rotary Bell

Peter Huisking (more opposite)

Have you ever wondered why every Rotary Club in the world uses a bell and gavel to open and close its meetings? For seasoned Rotarians, attending meetings as often as possible used to be a big deal, tracked by the Club secretary. Until recently, it was ironclad

that members should attend meetings except for legitimate excuses.

In 1920, Rotarians in New York City challenged Rotarians in London to an attendance contest. The contest would run for two years. At the end of the period, the losing club would present a prize.

At the end of 1922, the winner was the Rotary Club of New York City. A representative of the London Rotary club traveled to the US and presented the prize: a brass bell! This short news item from the New York Times details the ceremony:

LAST WEEK AT THE CLUB:



President Maricela rings bell for first time with D5500 Past District Governor Henrietta "Hank" Huisking who donated it to ARC!

Peter Huisking

The ARC bell and gavel were lost in the Eaton Fire on January 7, 2025. When D5500 PDG Hank Huisking learned of this, she contacted Rotarians in Arizona in her previous club, Sierra Vista West Rotary, chartered on April 19, 2005. It had merged with Sierra Vista Sunrise Rotary in 2022, but the bell and gavel remained with custodian Past President Anita Farrow. She was a charter member of the Rotary Club of Sierra Vista West and generously offered to donate the bell and gavel to our club. To make it even more special, current 5500 DG Sue Krahe-Archibald packed and mailed it! And today at our meeting, Past District Governor Hank, who is a member of Sierra Madre Rotary, presented it to our club. It was a poignant moment for her because she had been President of the SV West 2012-2013 and had used both during that year. Our District Governor Mike Driebe was in attendance to add to the historical moment. President Maricela is pleased to finally have a bell to get meetings started. And we are truly honored to be the new stewards of these treasured and timely gifts. It really exemplifies how Rotarians serve and also take care of each other.

What a great day for Rotarians!

(See Peter's research about the History of the Bell opposite & below)

“The spirit of International Rotary was dominant at a recent luncheon of the New York Club when IPP Arthur Chadwick of London Rotary presented to the New York Club the bell which acknowledged the victory in an attendance contest between the two clubs. In a speech notable for kindly humor and dignified sincerity, Rotarian Chadwick described the contest and its helpful effect on attendance. From 28% in 1920, the London attendance rose to 48% in 1921 and 51% over the period of the contest.

The bell has an interesting history, for during the World War (that is WWI), it was used on the auxiliary warship Patrol Number 20. It is mounted on a frame made from the oak of Admiral Lord Nelson’s famous warship, ‘HMS Victory’. Removing the British colors which draped the trophy, Rotarian Chadwick expressed the hope that in its new field, the bell might ever sound a clear ringing note of goodwill and symbolize to New York Rotary the friendship, fraternity, and loving affection of their brother Rotarians in London. In responding for New York Rotary, Pas-President Raymond Knoepfel said that “Each league of the bell’s progress on its last ocean voyage was cheered with the soft tinkling of its new message of the true brotherhood of Rotary.”

As a follow-up, the original bell was stolen during a fire in the Colonial Room at the New York Roosevelt Hotel in 1978. The bell used by the club today was obtained from the Rotary Club of London in 1992. The bell is also from a British ship, a submarine chaser, the “H.M.S. P20.” It was presented to the Club by Ken Standish, President of the London Club on June 17th, 1992.

The news of this contest and the “prize” spread throughout Rotary world and the use of a bell became a tradition. So now you know the whole story!

New Donation Link:
givebutter.com/EatonFireARC



Altadena Rotary

MARCH 29 - SAVE THE DATE!



2025 Soirée

Celebrate With Us...

You are invited to our Soirée on March 29, 2025 at The University Club of Pasadena.



Join us and support children and families living in isolation to succeed in school and in life.

For additional information contact Liz Kwong - Liz@FamiliesForwardLC.org or at 626-318-4936

OUT AND ABOUT:



PRESIDENT’S MESSAGE

By President Maricela

Every Time A Bell Rings!

From the movie, *It's a Wonderful Life*, the quote is "every time a bell rings, an angel gets her/his wings". For those in the room last week, I had the strangest feeling when ringing our newly gifted rotary bell for the first time since December 12th. For those who don't remember our program that day, we had two wonderful musicians performing, courtesy of Melodia



Brin Wall, ALD, Mark, Nikki Winslow, ALD, Heavenly Hughes, My Tribe Rise, and Club President Maricela Viramontes

Mariposa. We also had the Holiday Sweater contest (I should have won) and a visit for our brand new Assemblymember, John Harabedian who presented our Summer Concert Series sponsors with Certificates of Appreciation. Assemblymember Harabedian recently named our club as Non-Profit of the Year. Mark and I will be headed to Sacramento on May 21st to receive the award at a luncheon. We can only do this because of your support.

Back to the ringing of the bell to close the meeting last week, it made me think of another movie, the Wizard of Oz. I have written before that many times a week I just think I will wake up from a bad dream. Remember, there is no place like home.

This past week, our property was cleared by the Army Corp of Engineers. Although everything in what is known as the Ash Zone is gone, there is still much that has to be demolished or cleaned up. The ACOE has very specific tasks and instructions from FEMA. Speaking of FEMA and SBA, the deadline for filing is NEXT MONDAY. That is also true for filing the Right of Entry document to allow the ACOE to clean your debris area of the property. Even if you don't think you qualify or need services, get the application(s) started before March 31st. You can always pull out later.

I have heard that many of our club members have expended some dollars at both El Patron Restaurant and the Altadena Ale House that opened this past week. Thank you for supporting our local Altadena based businesses.

There is much to read in our weekly SPARKS newsletter. But I want to highlight and thank Chair of the Altadena Town Council, Victoria Knapp, for allowing us to print what she wrote on Facebook this week. There are many words/sentences/paragraphs in the articles this week, but please take time to read about the personal challenge that she writes about. Any of us could have also written very similar words on the topic. It is IMPORTANT to take care of our mental health.



Looking forward to seeing you on Thursday. STAY STRONG!

A Visitor from Vermont

By Mark Mariscal



On Sunday, Maricela and I met Ms. Nina Meyerhof from Vermont and Sue Steinburg (San Fernando Valley). Nina was in So Cal this weekend to deliver more than 500 Teddy Bears to children of the Palisades and Eaton Fires (photo opposite). She is also the wonderful woman who coordinated the contribution and delivery of ten boxes of new dresses that were a big hit. They were distributed on March 15th during our Community Give Away Day of Service.



OUT AND ABOUT (cont'd):

Above: Jennifer DeVoll w/Mark
Below: Mark w/Lavar Burton (Reading Rainbow) & Victoria Knapp (ATC)

