



The Award Winning
Malibu Rotary Club **Surfwriter**

November 13, 2013

Official Newsletter of the Rotary Club of Malibu
Malibu Rotary Club President William Wishard

Edited by Dr. John W. Elman
Pictures by Dr. John W. Elman

In This Issue (click underlined topics for web link when connected to the Internet)

- **Next Malibu Rotary Club Meeting November 20 at noon (with Fellowship starting at 11:30 a.m.) in LC152 at Pepperdine Drescher Campus. November 13, 2013 Speaker will be "Malibu Mom" Susanna Brisk. She is an author, actor and blogger who will discuss her book "I'll Be The Death of Me."**
- **Last Week Meeting: Craig Foster Explains AMPS (Advocates for Malibu Public Schools**
- **Other News and Guests From Last Malibu Rotary Club meeting**

- Malibu Rotary Club Holiday Party December 11, 2013
- Check [Calendar](#) on Malibu Rotary website MalibuRotary.org
- Malibu Rotary Club Website: www.MalibuRotary.org
- Rotary International Website: www.Rotary.org
- Rotary District 5280 Website: www.rotary5280.org/
- Rotary District 5280 “Rotarians Doing Business With Rotarians” Website: <http://yp5280.org/>
- RI President (2013-2014) Ron D Burton
- Rotary District 5280 Governor (2013-2014): Doug Baker
- Assistant Governor for Malibu Rotary Club: Alice Mantean (2013-14)

Craig Foster

**Explains AMPS
(Advocates for
Malibu Public
Schools)**

**Craig Foster, President of
AMPS (Advocates for
Malibu Public Schools)
Foundation, AMPS
Administrative
Coordinator Alexia
Burton, AMPS Board
Member Karen Farrer
and Malibu Rotary Club
President William Wisard
at Malibu Rotary Club
meeting November 13.**



The Malibu Rotary Club hosted forum for the candidates running for the Santa Monica-Malibu Unified School District Board of Education in October 2012. There were 6 candidates running for 3 open seats. Three of the candidates were from Malibu, Craig Foster, Karen Farrer and Seth Jacobson, and 3 were incumbent board members from Santa Monica. Malibu had not had a member on the board since 2004, and the three Malibu candidates hoped that someone from Malibu would be elected to represent the interests of Malibu at SMMUSD board meetings. Santa Monica has 60,821 registered voters and Malibu has 11,769. In the SMMUSD 84% of the registered voters live in Santa Monica. Although 78 % of the voters of Malibu voted for the Malibu candidates, the Santa Monica candidates won again, because the population of Santa Monica is greater and the Santa Monica candidates received a majority of the the votes in Santa Monica. At the candidates forum, when the Santa Monica candidates were asked if they thought that there should be at least one Malibu representative on the board, they all thought there should be. After the election, when the Greg Foster asked if there could be a Malibu representative sitting in at the SMMUSD meetings, just like the high schools have a non-voting representative there, the answer was no, there would be no Malibu representative.

There are many differences between Malibu and Santa Monica. Even though a majority of students and their voter parents in the SMMUSD live in Santa Monica most of the geographic area of the current district is in Malibu--71% of it. 64% of the population of Santa Monica is comprised of renters, while only 27% of Malibu residents are renters.

Craig Foster is a teacher and a father of a fifth grade student. He talks about the ideal teacher, especially one in particular--Rafe Esquith, who Craig looks up to as an inspiration of how public education should be.

Rafe Esquith is an award-winning teacher at [Hobart Boulevard Elementary School](#), in [Los Angeles, California](#), where he has taught since 1984. Many of his students, who are all from a community of poor and immigrant families, start class very early, leave late, and typically achieve high scores in standardized tests. Esquith has authored books about teaching. Hobart is the second-largest elementary school in the [United States](#). Most of the school's 2,000 students come from immigrant [Central American](#) and [Korean](#) families. According to a 2005 report on *National Public Radio*, 90 percent of his students were living below the poverty level, and all were from immigrant families, with none [speaking English as a first language](#).

Esquith's fifth-grade students consistently score in the top 5 to 10 percent of the country in standardized tests. Many of Esquith's students voluntarily start class at 6:30 each morning, two hours before the rest of the school's students. They volunteer to come early, work through recess, stay as late as 6:00 pm, and come to class during vacations and holidays. Each April, Esquith's students perform one of Shakespeare's plays as *The Hobart Shakespearians*. They have opened for the Royal Shakespeare Company, have appeared at the Globe Theater in London, were hired by Sir Peter Hall to perform *A Midsummer Night's Dream* at the Ahmanson Theatre in Los Angeles, and were the subjects of a 2005 documentary.

Craig says that every child has some extraordinary talent and it is the job of the teacher to find that talent and pull it out in the learning process. That is what Rafe does. It is how you get through to students in the classroom.

The concept of individualized education is something Greg hopes can be incorporated into the independent Malibu school district that he and AMPS envision. There are many programs that Greg should be in schools but are not. This includes k-12 Language Programs. The SMMUSD does not currently have foreign language classes in its elementary or middle schools. He points out that these are the grades and years in a child's life when it is the best time to learn a foreign language. He said basic teaching methods have not changed in 100 years but should be. They should be more individualized for the children. He empathizes the need for child centered education.

Much of what Craig had to say and show is available on the organization's website www.ampsmalibu.org. Advocates for Malibu Public Schools (AMPS) is an organization that supports a movement toward an independent, locally controlled Malibu Unified School District. AMPS commissioned WestEd — a national nonpartisan, nonprofit research, development, and service agency that works with education and other communities to promote excellence, achieve equity, and improve learning for children, youth, and adults to do and write a *Feasibility Analysis of Proposed Santa Monica-Malibu Unified School District Reorganization*. The entire 45 page report was finished in January 2013 and is available on the www.ampsmalibu.org website.

This report, prepared by WestEd as consultant to the Advocates for Malibu Public Schools (AMPS), assesses the feasibility of reorganizing the current Santa Monica-Malibu School District into two unified school districts that follows city/community demarcations for the areas of Malibu and Santa Monica. This analysis is organized around the nine criteria set forth in Education Code that

addresses issues of identity, program, and fiscal viability of reorganization proposals.

Based on the analysis of data, interviews, and review of information, most of the state criteria for reorganization are met. There are a few criteria for which specific conditions must be addressed before the criteria can be considered to be met.

Following is a brief description of the criteria for which there are remaining further details required before they can be deemed as substantially met:

- *Criterion 2: Community Identity – Many residents view the two areas, the City of Santa Monica and the City of Malibu as distinctly separate communities – with their own character and identity. Interviews should be conducted with students and parents from both attendance areas to confirm the presumption that there are indeed ties to their community as defined by their high school and elementary school district enrollment areas. If the interview data bears out this presumption - then this criterion would be met.*

- *Criterion 3: Equitable Property and Facility Division – There are numerous reasons to expect that all property and facilities would be divided equitably. The only remaining questions are what method the districts would use to do so and what facility options are available to address the relocation of central services for Malibu Unified School District. Currently, the District Office, Maintenance and Operations Office and Transportation Yard are located in facilities on sites in Santa Monica.*

- *Criterion 6: No Disruption to Educational Programs or Performance – While the core offerings at all impacted schools would likely remain strong, or even improve, the needs of students requiring special opportunities and services have not been fully addressed. Specifically, this report identifies questions regarding provision of services for students with disabilities, English Learners, and students requiring alternative education options.*

• *Criterion 9: No Substantial Negative Impact on District Fiscal Management or Status – This report finds that should the District reorganize, the resulting Santa Monica Unified and Malibu Unified School Districts would be financially viable so long as each district’s management team adopt procedures to improve economies of scale and negotiate reasonable salary schedules with their employees that allow for long-term fiscal solvency. The continuation of the Measure R parcel tax is critical to deem the reorganization viable. For this reason, we recommend that legal counsel be consulted; and if necessary, special legislation be considered to delineate conditions for preserving the Measure R parcel tax revenue for the resulting districts. The continued level of uncertainty regarding state funding makes it difficult to fully evaluate this criterion; updates are likely necessary as the state’s fiscal condition becomes clearer.*

Based on the available information, if the above issues can be addressed to the satisfaction of all affected stakeholder groups, this report finds that the state criteria applied to the evaluation of reorganization proposals are adequately met.

The new districts will be adequate in terms of number of pupils enrolled.

- *Education Code Section 35753(a)(1)*

It is the intent of the State Board that direct service districts not be created that will become more dependent upon county offices of education and state support unless unusual circumstances exist. Therefore, each district affected must be adequate in terms of numbers of pupils, in that:

(A) Each such district should have the following projected enrollment on the date that the proposal becomes effective or any new district becomes effective for all purposes:

Elementary District 901

High School District 301

Unified District 1,501

(B) The analysis shall state whether the projected enrollment of each affected district will increase or decline and the extent thereof.

- *California Code of Regulations, Title 5, Section 18573(a)(1)*

Enrollment in the District has been declining. Due to environmental constraints and infrastructure limitations the trend of continued decline will likely continue for the City of Malibu. There have been approximately 119 new housing units constructed in the City of Malibu during the period of 2006-2011, which is a low growth rate.

The City of Santa Monica has the constraint of limited vacant land for new single family homes; but by recycling lower density use land into higher density use, there have been 2,174 housing units completed during the period of 1998 to 2005. It is of interest to note that while there has been an increase in the number of housing units, the size of the average household in Santa Monica has declined by 7% since 1980. This decline is attributed to a decline in families and an increase in single households, which more than likely has contributed to the decline in student enrollment. Based on the District's enrollment forecast, this trend is likely to continue.

In general, any shifts in school-age population between the two new districts will likely be minor and would not drive either of the districts enrollments below the standard. Other potential population or enrollment swings, such as the opening or closing of a private school in the area, while difficult to predict, are unlikely to change the ability of the resulting districts to meet the state's criteria.

Much of the questions and discussion at the Malibu Rotary Club presentation by Craig had to do

with the cost of the school districts. Isn't it more efficient, less expensive, to have one larger

district, with only one superintendent, one administration, rather than two? Is there enough



money to support two districts without raising taxes?

These questions and others are answered on the AMPSMalibu.org website:

What are the finances of this? How would these districts do in terms of their budgets?



The chief financial officer (CFO) of the SMMUSD reported that the new Santa Monica district would be \$600,000 better off, all things considered, than their current budget deficit. This does not include the reduction in administrative overhead they would presumably achieve from the 17 percent drop in the student population. The CFO also said that the new Malibu District would have a \$700,000 budget surplus, including the provision for a \$1 million cushion to pay for the new administrative apparatus. AMPS believes the new Malibu school district would spend less money on administration.

Q: Where's this new money coming from?



For Santa Monica, the benefits come from keeping all of the funds that flow from the City of Santa Monica to the school district in various joint use agreements and similar arrangements. 17 percent of those sales tax revenues currently benefit children in the Malibu schools. That's \$2.4 million a year that would stay in Santa Monica.

For Malibu, the tremendous amount of property value in the new district would mean that we would be funded as a “basic aid” district – which means that Malibu’s tax revenue would exceed the state minimum “revenue limit.” Malibu would keep \$4 million more than our pro rata share of the money now paid by the state to fund SMMUSD – at no detriment to the Santa Monica kids.

Q: What would this mean to a Malibu renter, or someone in one of the mobile home parks, or a Malibu property owner? Also, would business taxes go up?



AMPS pledges this won't cost anything -- no increases in taxes to anybody in Malibu or Santa Monica. If this costs any kids – in either city -- any money, we won't do it. If it causes any increase in property taxes, parcel taxes, sales taxes or business taxes, we won't do it.

Q: What does this mean to the current “gift tax” on parent contributions to the schools which take 15% of a parent’s contribution for the district-wide equity program?



A: Right now, Malibu PTAs raise over \$2 million a year, and send nearly 15% of that to Santa Monica for the Equity Fund, the vast majority of which is spent in Santa Monica. That’s more than a \$200,000 loss to Malibu schools. Keeping that money in Malibu will help to fund the new school district. In addition, at the beginning of the 2014-15 school year, the district-wide fundraising policy will be implemented. That very controversial plan completely eliminates the ability of school PTA’s and booster clubs to spend money for staff, including staff for school enrichment programs. A Malibu school district would not participate in this plan.

Q: What about the current parcel tax and outstanding bond issues? How would those be handled?



A: Because of counterintuitive legal constraints, a separation of Santa Monica and Malibu would eliminate the parcel tax in Malibu. Our preferred solution is one that worked in a reorganization in Santa Barbara: a special bill in Sacramento to keep in place the taxes that Malibu has already approved – again, without increasing any taxes or levying new ones.

Guests and Other News at Last Malibu Rotary Club Meeting

Malibu Rotary Club President Bill Wishard called on **Margo Neal** to describe her impressions of the November 9th Paul Harris Rotary Foundation Dinner which was held under the wings for the Space Shuttle Endeavor at the California Science Center. Margo said that enjoyed the presentation given by speaker Kevin Chilton, who was one of the first astronauts on the first mission of the endeavor. While video of the flight was being shown Chilton described the various things that went wrong while they were in space. At one time there was a problem that none of the veterans at NASA could not solve but a couple of young engineer computer geeks suggested a solution that saved the mission.

Guests at the Malibu Rotary Club meeting November 13 included, besides Advocates for Malibu Public Schools (AMPS) **Craig Foster, Karen Farrer** and **Alexia Burton**, regular visitor **Jeanne Custis** and **Kelly Segona's** guest **Alex Segona**.

Malibu Rotary Club Holiday Party December 11, 2013

Maggie Luckerath has worked with Bill Krenz for a place and menu for the Malibu Rotary Club Annual Holiday Party to be held at 6:00 p.m. at the Malibu West Clubhouse, on the beach at the corner of Trancas and PCH in Malibu

Price of \$35.00/person not including alcohol BYOB includes the following dinner menu and amenities:

Besides a personal RSVP to Maggie at Malibu Rotary Club, e-mail or phone call, and giving check to Hubert for \$35.00 per person, you can also RSVP for you and your guest(s) on www.Maliburotary.org and mail check.

Please see Malibu Rotary Club Website www.maliburotary.org for latest Calendar and future speakers and facebook pages for other news.

Like Rotary Club of Malibu on 

Calendar

(All Malibu Rotary Club meetings are at 12:00 Noon in LC 152 at the Pepperdine Drescher campus Villa Graziadio Executive Center unless otherwise noted)

Nov 20, 2013

Susanna Brisk
"Malibu Mom"

Author, actor and blogger Susanna Brisk, will stop by to discuss her book "I'll Be The Death of Me." A funny, raw and searingly honest memoir, Susanna will address topics including parenting with a mental illness, surviving your family of origin and finding your creative self, even while there are small people in your midst who require lunch.

For more information about Susanna and her book visit www.malibumom.com and <http://amzn.to/13y1tjq>.

November 21, 2013

**Malibu Rotary Club Sponsors Thanksgiving Dinner for Homeless with SOS at
Webster Elementary School 6:00 p.m.**

Malibu Rotarians prepare and serve dinner for homeless in conjunction with SOS at John L Webster Elementary School, 3602 Winter Canyon Road, Malibu, CA 90265.

Dec 11, 2013

Malibu Rotary Club Holiday Party (no meeting at noon)

"Evening Holiday Party at Malibu West Club House PCH at Trancas in Malibu (no meeting at noon)"

Dec 25, 2013

Christmas Holiday (no meeting)

"Christmas Holiday (no meeting)"

Jan 01, 2014

Happy New Year (no Rotary meeting)

"Watch the Rotary Float in the Rose Parade"

Jan 14, 2014

To Be Announced

"Rotary District Breakfast"

District 5280 Breakfasts are held at the Westin LAX Hotel, 5400 W. Century Blvd., Los Angeles, CA 90045. Registration opens at 7:00 a.m. Free self-parking is available in the hotel parking structure. Valet parking at Westin Hotel rates.

Jan 16, 2014 (tentative)

Malibu Rotary Hi School Singing Competition

