



*Award Winning*

## **Malibu Rotary Club Surfwriter**

February 2, 2011

**Official Newsletter of the Rotary Club of Malibu  
Malibu Rotary Club President Christopher Bauman**

**Edited by Dr. John W. Elman  
Pictures by Dr John W. Elman and Gary Darakjian**

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- **Malibu Rotary Club Website: [www.MalibuRotary.org](http://www.MalibuRotary.org)**
- **Rotary International Website: [www.Rotary.org](http://www.Rotary.org)**
- **Rotary District 5280 Website: [www.rotary5280la.org](http://www.rotary5280la.org)**

- Rotary District 5280 “Rotarians Doing Business With Rotarians” Website: <http://yp5280.org/>
- [RI President \(2010-2011\)](#) Ray Klinginsmith
- Rotary District 5280 Governor (2010-20 11): Doug Baker

**Gary Darakjian and**  
**Malibu’s Community Outreach Program**  
**“Standing On Stone”**



Even before **Gary Darakjian** graduated from Pepperdine in May of 2010, he had volunteered to work with the organization started by honorary Malibu Rotarian **Hollie Packman** and her husband **Daniel** at the Malibu community outreach program known as SOS—“Standing On Stone.” After graduation he began working with them fulltime as Program Director, and at the February 2<sup>nd</sup> Malibu Rotary Club meeting he talked and showed, via a Powerpoint presentation, the large scope of the all-volunteer organization.

The mission of SOS is to work with local homeless people and help them make a transition to a better life. They do this through emergency services, friendship, mentoring, transition assistance, and win-win relationships with our community.

S.O.S. is 100% Volunteer Run. 100% of the money goes to helping people make a complete transition. All of its decisions are based on its mission to help people transition to a better life. Gary said they ask, “Is this going to help this person ultimately make a transition off of the street?” The answer to this question is often different for each case.



They are dedicated to suspending judgments and not making decisions based on assumptions. “Instead, we listen, pray and assess each case as it comes our way”

Malibu Rotary has become involved with SOS by having its members cook and serve an annual Thanksgiving dinner. SOS serves dinners to the homeless population every Thursday evening at Webster school. They do this all year long. But that is just

one of the things they do.

A costly program they do is The Home Sweet Home project. They determine families who are ready to sustain an apartment and then provide first and last month (security deposit) rental assistance. The most important aspect of this program is SOS’ focus on accountability and mentorship. They work with each person to ensure that they maintain sobriety, are employed and are successful in their jobs, are paying bills, and are growing emotionally.

They also help ensure that families and individuals who are at risk for becoming homeless are able to sustain their housing. This may mean providing assistance for maintenance (keeping their home livable), helping pay a month’s rent, or providing groceries and other needs so they can focus finances on paying rent.

Another of the SOS projects is the Family Adoption Program. They have found an increasing number of families in the community who are in dire need of assistance. SOS developing new program connects families in need with other families and mentors who are willing to help them make a transition to self sufficiency. This has included mentoring for job applications for parents, housing assistance, referrals to counseling for children and parents, dental assistance for children, grant writing for after school programs, assistance with emergency food and clothing and gifts for children during the Holidays.

In 2010 SOS provided permanent housing for 45 people, including 23 children. They provided meals for over 1200 people and provided emergency shelter and shelter supplies for 312 people.

Gary cited a few examples of people who had been helped by the program. In the first year of SOS, they met a couple living in their van and pregnant with their first child. They later had a second child. They struggled through many years of working to get sober and be good parents to their children. The mother suffers from mental health issues and the father is working hard to

keep things together. SOS stood beside this family while they got the help they needed. They were able to provide school clothes for the children this year and rental assistance.

There is also the family of 5 with 3 boys: When the folks at SOS met them they were living in their car with three boys (8, 9, 12). They had been sober for over a year and were finding it impossible to save up enough to get into a place. Very quickly SOS was able to help get them get stabilized. The organization paid first and last rent for them, got them groceries for a few months, and provide ongoing support for gaps in their finances (like an unexpected car break down or help with school supplies). Both parents have since been working, staying clean and sober and attending church regularly. In fact, the mother just received a promotion at her job with a hotel chain. The boys are now in school and doing very well. Their eldest son, just finished a junior fire fighter program and their youngest is getting much needed assistance for his learning disabilities.

Another family of 5 has 3 girls: When SOS met them they were camping out in the camp ground with their three daughters. They are an intact family with mom and dad still together. Dad went to work every day from the camp ground. Six months prior he didn't have enough work to make ends meet and they got an eviction. They were paying nearly \$1000 a month to camp out at the camp ground. The mom was home schooling the kids from the campground. Because of their eviction, it took several volunteers and the families hard work three weeks to find an apartment complex that would take them. SOS found a place in Santa Clarita and paid their first and last. They just had their year anniversary in their apartment. They still barely make ends meet and live in a tiny apartment but they are a joy filled, grateful family. The kids are all in school and doing very well.

Another example is and older lady who is a retired school teacher. She had some trouble with family and left the east coast to get away. She quickly secured a job working as a live in nanny which was going very well. Without more than a week's notice, the family announced that they were moving and didn't need her anymore. Her things were put into storage and she became homeless. Unable to reach out to family, she had nowhere to turn. SOS met her and realized that she needed urgent help. They put her in a hotel for three days while they worked with her to search for rooms for rent and a job. Within those three days, they secured a room for her and she swiftly found work at Target where she has now successfully worked for 10 months. She has saved her money and bought an old car and gets around all on her own. She has become a dear friend to the SOS family and is proof that without family many of us are at risk for homelessness.

Gary talked about another individual. "In 2009, we lost one of our friends. For years he had been on the fringes of the homeless community in Malibu. He was never shy about expressing the fact that he had no need to be a part of SOS. He wasn't interested. It was about two years ago now that he first came through the doors after knowing him for nearly 10 years. When he walked in we all gasped not only because he was there but because he looked so sickly. We quickly learned that he was suffering from liver failure and was scared and wanted companionship. Over the next 18 months, he made a radical transformation in his life and made many, many new friends. When the doctor at county hospital called saying we needed to come quickly, we just sent a couple emails to let our team know what was happening. Within a half an hour of our arrival

there were 11 Pepperdine students and volunteers there with us by his side. This man would have died alone but instead his ICU room was overflowing. Sometimes SOS's job is to stand by the living and sometimes it is to stand by the dying. We were able to hold a memorial service in his honor attended by many in the community."

70% of the funding for SOS comes from private donations. 25% comes from churches and other non-profits (Malibu Presbyterian, University Church of Christ, and Artific Tree Thrift Store). The City of Malibu has provided grants to provide for the remaining 5%.

Immediate needs of SOS include funding for the Home Sweet Home program: Because of the economy, there is more need for rental assistance. They are looking to expand this program to meet that need. Also they need shelter supplies. The bus that was used as an emergency shelter was burned in the 2007 Malibu fire. Winter is here and because they no longer have an emergency shelter, all we can do is give away tents, tarps, sleeping bags and blankets. These items are in high demand.

For more about SOS, its services and its needs, see its website [SOSMalibu.org](http://SOSMalibu.org) or phone 805-499-4279.

## **Other News and Guests from Last Malibu Rotary Club Meeting**

Malibu Rotary Club President Chris Bauman was back, and had President-Elect Kevin Boling, report on Rotary District Governor Doug Bakers Fund Raising Wine Tasting event which he attended in Seal Beach the previous week. Kevin said he met many of the district leaders, but didn't necessarily make a good impression on them. As we all know when Kevin is in the room he is going to talk a lot, and in trying to make a point during dinner, he waved his arm and knocked a bottle of red wine over on Rotary District Treasurer Dennis Benko.

Bill Wishard talked about Rotary District events he attended. One was the President's Dinner, which was at the Columbia Memorial Space Shuttle Simulator at the Downey Studios. It is run by Rotarian Scott Pomrehn, and Bill said if you get a chance, it's a neat place to experience. You can simulate being an astronaut. The second event Bill experienced was going to the nominating event for the Governor elect nominee. Bill went there as a nonvoting "silent" member representing small clubs, but because the voting member of the nominating committee from small clubs wasn't there, he was elevated to voting status, and got to participate in the discussions.

Kudos again to **Geoff Ortiz** for another fantastic Annual Malibu Rotary Club Senior and Middle School Singing Competition on January 12<sup>th</sup> (pictured below). The Stauffer Chapel venue was one that everyone seemed to like and we will probably have the music competition there in the future. Geoff also announced the newest production at Malibu Stage, an original production of *A Night At The Oscars* playing from February 11<sup>th</sup> through March 20<sup>th</sup>.

## Guests

Guests at the meeting included sculptress **Danielle Anjou** of the Montecito Rotary Club who we hope to have joining our club, and her representative **Maggie Luckerath**, as well as Maggie's husband, Hubert. Also at the Malibu Rotary Club meeting of February 2 was **Jonathan Friedman**, who has long worked with Margo when he was a writer for the *Malibu Times*, and will be the featured speaker the Malibu Rotary Club meeting March 9<sup>th</sup> when he talks about [Malibu.Patch.com](http://Malibu.Patch.com).

## Malibu Rotary Club Supports BioSand Filters in Ecuador

Malibu Rotary Club voted to send \$500 to the Rotary Club of Pontiac Michigan to help build and install BioSand Filters in Santo Domingo De Los Colorados, Ecuador. As was noted by Carol Cousineau, who, along with husband Ron brought the project to our attention, after installing the first BioSand filters in Ecuador (and pictured left) "That money would be matched by the next District Grant, which we have been assured we will get. So, for instance \$500.00 become \$750.00."

Malibu Rotary Club President Chris Bauman signed papers in November, 2010 for the Bio Sand Filters Michigan Rotary District Simplified Grant.

The filters and two 5 gallon safe water containers per unit, cost around \$60.00 each, so a donation of \$500.00 would provide 12 families of five or more with 20 gallons of water each day - enough for drinking, cooking, brushing teeth, bathing and washing clothes! The filters are expected to last at least 50 years without the need to add any expense except chlorine - available and inexpensive. That means each family will have more money to provide more nutritious food for their families, since they don't have to pay for propane to boil their water. It will mean more time to spend with their children, rather than boiling or foraging for firewood. With great improvement in the health of all the family members, fewer cases of diarrhea and stomach flu from bad water and parasites, the parents will better be able to hold down a job and provide for their families, children will be able to attend school more days and have a better future.



We are excited about this project because we anticipate that this is just the beginning. All over Ecuador, there are families struggling to survive, with a high infant mortality rate, because of bad water. This successful project will be a shining example and model. Rotary is the perfect vehicle for getting the word out about BioSand and accomplishing the goal of providing safe drinking water for the world. BioSand is one of the four methods of purifying water recommended for Third World Countries by the World Health Organization. (We have researched the others. Since they provide only a small amount of water for drinking, are small and ceramic, so more susceptible to breakage or deterioration, or adding so much chlorine that the people won't drink it, the concrete BioSand is by far the best choice for all but mountainous areas, where a more expensive plastic version of BioSand is an alternative.)”

For a while it looked like the matching grant process was not going to happen.

When Malibu Rotarian Bill Wishard visited Ecuador in March, 2010, he was able to meet with Ecuador Past District 4400 Governor, Juan Prinz, to get project back on track

Please see Malibu Rotary Club Website [www.maliburotary.org](http://www.maliburotary.org) for latest Calendar and future speakers

**Calendar**

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**Malibu Rotary Club Speakers (all meetings at at 7:30 a.m in the Pepperdine University Fireside Room)**

Feb 9 2011, **Ray Kotroczo:** Intelligent and Profitable Investing

Feb 16 2011, **Luci Prosapio:** Rotary Ambassador Scholar-to-be

Feb 23 2011, **Rhiannon Bailard,** Asst VP, Gov Affairs, Pepperdine: Pepperdine Campus Life Project

Mar 9 2011, **Jonathan Friedman,** malibu.patch.com