



The Award Winning
Malibu Rotary Club Surfwriter

January 16, 2014

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 and Griselda Espinoza

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- **Malibu Rotary Club Middle and High School Singing Competition a Pepperdine's Stauffer Chappel on Thursday January 16**
- **Next Malibu Rotary Club Meeting January 22, 2014 at noon (with Fellowship starting at 11:30 a.m.) in LC152 at Pepperdine Drescher Campus. Speaker will be one of Malibu Rotary Club's newest members, Kelly Sagona, talking about "Recycling Peoples Lives."**
- **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/
- **RI President (2013-2014) Ron D Burton**
- **Rotary District 5280 Governor (2013-2014): Doug Baker**
- **Assistant Governor for Malibu Rotary Club: Alice Muntean (2013-14)**

Rotary District Breakfast on January 14

The Malibu Rotary Club was responsible for 17 paid reservations to the January 14th Rotary District Breakfast at the Westin LAX Hotel. The 14 Malibu Rotarians and their friends that actually attended saw a wonderful program, starting with music, and the featured speaker Mark Gerogos, and news and announcements from the energetic district leaders.



Geragos

Mark John Geragos is an Armenian-American criminal defense lawyer. Geragos has been named “Lawyer of the Year” in both Criminal and Civil arenas and was named by California Law Business Magazine as “one of the 100 most influential attorneys in California” 3 years in a row.

As the principal with the internationally known trial law firm of Geragos & Geragos, Mark gained a national reputation as a trial lawyer due to a number of high-profile cases he has won over the years. In Geragos' recently published book, *Mistrial*, he draws the curtain on the courtroom's ugly realities from stealth jurors who secretly swing for a conviction, to cops who regularly lie on the witness stand, to defense attorneys terrified of going to trial. Ultimately, he questions whether a justice system model drawn up two centuries ago before blogs and television is still viable today. Geragos is a legal expert and prominent criminal defense attorney who has worked on everything from celebrity media-circuses to equally compelling cases defending individuals desperate to avoid the spotlight. Clients that he represented include Michael Jackson, actress Winona Ryder, politician Gary Condit, Susan McDougal and Scott Peterson

Geragos went on early in the program because he also had to be somewhere else that morning. He talked about why he became a defense lawyer--he wanted to defend the underdog--and he idolized Perry Mason. Mark's father was prosecutor. Mark quips that a monkey can be a prosecutor. “All you have to do is go to court and ask the witness ‘And what happened next?’” Mark said that years ago being a defense lawyer was a looked up to, favored profession in the public eye. But since the OJ trial defense attorneys have become more vilified.

Mark Geragos sprung onto the national scene when he defended Susan McDougal, an associate of Bill Clinton, who was the only person imprisoned in the Whitewater case, and who was later accused of embezzling money from LA Philharmonic conductor Zubin Mehta. The prosecutor on the Whitewater case against McDougal was independent council Ken Starr, currently President and Chancellor of Baylor University and former Dean of the Pepperdine Law School. During those early years it was Mark's idea to form the 1-800-STOP-STARR defense fund.

In addition to criminal defense Mark also does civil law. He said that although his name sounds like he is of Greek heritage, he is, in fact of Armenian heritage. A recent case had him investigating heirs to life insurance policies for people that were killed during the Armenian genocide. The **Armenian Genocide** was the Ottoman Government's systematic extermination of its minority [Armenian](#) subjects from their historic homeland in the territory constituting the present-day [Republic of Turkey](#). It took place during and after [World War I](#). Many of

the people killed had small \$300 life insurance policies. Those policies were ultimately assumed by New York Life Insurance Company. Mark Geragos was the Plaintiff attorney in a Class Action Lawsuit for \$20 million against New York Life representing the heirs of some of the million people who lost their lives during the genocide. When Mark was on a recent Larry King Live show, during the break he asked Larry to ask him, when the show resumed, "Mark, what are you doing now?" When the question was posed on air he told about how he had just returned from Europe where he was able to find some of these almost 100 year old policies in the New York Life case. The name on one of the policies was for someone who had his families original name *Garogolian*. After questioning his family he realized it was a policy for his Uncle. When New York Life settled the case the amount was \$17,500,00. Mark said that he was originally going to settle for \$17,000,000, but when he saw that it was his uncle's policy he added another \$500,000 to the settlement amount.

Another recent case Mark is proud of is one that he took for the family of a drug dealer who had been shot and killed by police in Utah. His investigation uncovered the fact that the police had been staking out drug dealer, then stealing the money and selling the drugs themselves.



In promoting the Rotary International Convention to be held June 1-4, 2014, in Sydney, Australia, PDG Brad Robinson (L) interviewed District Governor Doug Baker who was dressed in a kangaroo costume. The deadpan Doug, as kangaroo, let it be known that he was on his way to IHOP, and during the interview said he felt something moving in his pouch. Later, when Doug returned to the stage as himself he pointed out the importance of jocularly in Rotary.

Other events talked about at the District Breakfast included:

Rotary District Conference May 15-18 at Hyatt Regency in Indian Wells. The hotel rate is \$179/night plus tax and includes parking. The sessions on Friday will start at 10:30 a.m. The Theme of Friday Hospitality Night is “Homecoming.”

District Service Project--Travel size bathroom kits for the homeless

RYLA April 25 through 27th At the camp high school students (including 2 sponsored by Malibu Rotary Club) are separated from friends and learn to work with others.

Colombia Projects March 23

Rotary District Home Boys Industries Tour

Chair:

[Carmela Raack](#)

Date:

Jan 21, 2014
at 02:00 PM –
04:00 PM

Location:

Homeboy
Industries
130 West
Bruno Street
Los Angeles,
CA 90012
United States

You can join District 5280 Rotarians at the Rotary Community Alliance (RCA) Meeting at Homeboy Industries to see the Rotary Foundation Grants provided commercial oven, tattoo removal machine, and professional pastry machine. The day will include remarks from Father Greg Boyle, bakery tours, building tours and insight into the various programs provided at Homeboy Industries. For those interested, there will be a no-host lunch in the Homegirl Cafe at 1:00pm.

RSVP to Carmela Raack, carmraack@aol.com or 310-641-0142

Malibu Rotarians and friends who attended the Rotary District Breakfast were **Griselda Espinoza, Bill Wishard, Hubert and Maggie Luckerath, John Elman, David Baird, Margo Neal, Irene Bettler, David Zielski, Jeanne Cusis, Kelly Sagona** her sister, **Peter Formosa,** and **Tom and Jane Bos.**

**Malibu Rotary Club Awards 7 Winners at The Annual Malibu Rotary Club
Middle and High School Singing Competition at Pepperdine's Stauffer
Chappel on Thursday January 16**



The three winners from Malibu High School -Back Row: Left to Right: Jade Bates (3rd place), Maggie Valdman (2nd place, Isobel Anthony (1st place) Judges: Claudia Zahn, Sara Levy, Julia Holland

Malibu Middle School Winners-Front Row Left to Right: Ava Daikeler (1st Place), Gina Marcellino (2nd place), Claire Anneet (3rd place tie), Ava Kotler (3rd pace tie).

The 2014 Annual Malibu Rotary Club Middle and High School Singing Competition was held in Stauffer Chapel at Pepperdine University on January 16. This year music professionals Claudia Zahn, Sara Levy, Julia Holland judged a dozen entrants and the top 3 contestants in the high school division and the middle school division were awarded cash prizes of \$250 for first, \$150 for second, and \$100 for third place in each division. This year there was a tie for third place in the middle school competition and there were 7 cash awards given. Music chosen by students ranged from opera to Broadway show tunes. The singers are all students of Amy Lock's choral classes at Malibu Middle School and Malibu High School.



First place finisher High School finisher Isobel Anthony (L) will be sponsored by the Malibu Rotary Club to compete in Rotary District annual Art, Dance, Music and Speech contest on March 1 at Loyola Marymount University where she will compete for \$1000 prize.

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

facebook

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)

Jan 22, 2014

Kelly Sagona

“Recycling People’s Lives”

Jan 29, 2014

[Susanna Brisk](#)

"More Malibu Mom Finding Humor in Life"

She is an author, actor, blogger, and stand up comic who will read more from 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>.

Feb 05, 2014

[Irene Bettler](#)

"My Life and Learning "

