

The Award Winning
Malibu Rotary Club Surfwriter

May 16, 2012

Official Newsletter of the Rotary Club of Malibu

Malibu Rotary Club President of the Month David Baird
Malibu Rotary Club President of Record 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)

- **Last Week: Tomas Martinez Pepperdine Professor of Psychology talks about his life as a polio survivor**
- **News and Guests from Last Malibu Rotary Club Meeting**

- Next Week May 23— Malibu Rotary Club meeting 7:30 a.m. in Pepperdine Fireside Room: Bill Wishard Will Talk About His Experience at the 2012 Rotary International Convention This Month in Bangkok Thailand
- Malibu Rotary Club International Projects in Puerto Rico
- Malibu Rotary Club is [Official Sponsor of Smile Trek](#)
- 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.rotary5280la.org
- Rotary District 5280 “Rotarians Doing Business With Rotarians” Website: <http://yp5280.org/>
- [RI President \(2011-2012\)](#) Kalyan Banerjee
- Rotary District 5280 Governor (2011-2012): Brad Robinson
- Assistant Governor for Malibu Rotary Club: Kevin Smith
- Rotary District Newsletter—see it on Rotary District 5280 site or click [here](#)



Tomas Martinez Pepperdine Professor of Psychology talks about his life as a polio survivor

Anyone who has been involved with Rotary in the last 20 years knows that a good portion of Rotary’s effort, money, and resources, has been aimed at eradication of polio in the world. That effort is almost done. New cases of polio are only reported now in parts of Africa and in Afghanistan, and getting to kids in war zones has been difficult to do, but is continuing. It has been over a half century since there have been any new cases in the United States and many Americans have never met someone who was actually afflicted with the disease. Today’s speaker at the Malibu Rotary Club meeting, Tomas Martinez, Pepperdine Professor of Psychology, has lived with polio since he was nine months old, and his story is both inspirational and informative.

Tomas was born December 1, 1949 in the Los Angeles area. His father was a construction worker and his mother worked in a nursery. They both ad come from large families of farm workers. He was already standing on his own by August 1950, according to his father, but by the winter he was unable to use his the lower part of his legs to hold himself up. His muscles had become so weakened

he would never regain the ability to walk on his own without the use of braces and crutches. He was diagnosed with the dreaded disease of polio. It was dreaded for many reasons, not only that it caused physical disability and often death, but there was a social stigma—kids with polio were not allowed to be put with normal kids. The infant Tomas was immediately taken away from his family and lived in a hospital ward under quarantine, for many months. The fear was that he would be contagious to his family and other children.

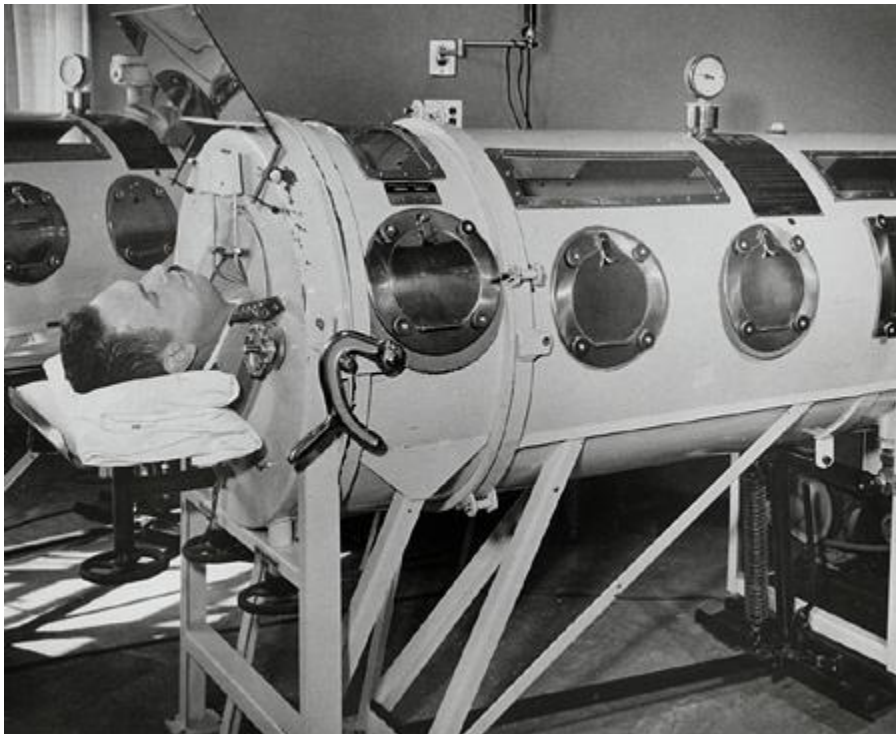
Polio has been present since recorded time and was described medically as infantile paralysis. It is a viral borne disease that came as an epidemic especially in the summers and often in the neighborhoods that lacked sanitation or healthy living conditions. One of the myths was that a lack of cleanliness had caused the disease. The first polio epidemic in the United States was recorded in Vermont, in 1894. The worst epidemic began in 1916. Over 27,000 children and adults contracted Polio in America that year, 6,000 were fatal. During the epidemic of 1955 29,000 had contracted the disease. 13,000 were left paralyzed like Thomas. The summer epidemics occurred during hotter and humid weather and traveled from the East Coast to the West. It had become an annual plague that created so much fear and suspicion that children were locked away and not allowed to play outside or with neighborhood children for fear of it contagion. Flu like symptoms, fatigue, fever, muscle weakness seemed to be the early presenting medical symptoms.

Considering that the disease of Polio had killed so many up to the time Tomas contracted the illness, he was considered to be one of the “luckier” ones because only his lower extremities were affected. Others became more severely and permanently disabled. There were actually three types of Polio virus. The least destructive produced flu-like symptoms with fever and muscle ache that dissipated after a few weeks. The most damaging strain was Bulbar Polio. It impacts the Medulla Oblongata of the brain and neural system. The neural pathway from the brain to the spinal cord becomes damaged. Tomas is thankful that his breathing and upper body had been spared. Polio weakens the muscles and neurologically impacts the ability for the psychomotor system to function effectively

Los Angeles County Hospital and Casa Colima Hospital were the first hospitals to provide care for Tomas as a child. Orthopedic Hospital of Los Angeles provided most of Tomas’ medical care through the rest of his childhood. He appreciates that all of his care was provided because of the kindness and donations of others. The doctors and nurses became his surrogate family; all together he had about 15 different surgeries on both of his legs between the ages of 6 and 18. Many of these surgeries were experimental and were designed to facilitate his walking. For example, “Sweat” Therapy designed to create seizures by inducing comas by raising body temperature above fever levels, or being immersed in ice baths, were treatments tried on Tomas. Some of the surgeries had no impact, while others like stapling his longer right leg from growing so that the left leg might catch up, did. Tomas jokes that he probably would have been a few inches taller if the one leg hadn’t been intentionally stopped from growing so that the short leg would catch up. Tomas says that about four and a half years of his childhood was spent in hospitals recovering from various surgeries.

Tomas received a limited education in the hospital, which impacts him to this day. It was in the hospital that he gained his love of books and reading as a way of escaping and learning about the world. He also learned a lot about the care of others and this has benefitted him professionally today as has been able to assist others in their times of illness and health.

His treatment by doctors gave Tomas an education of how people should and should not be treated. At age 10 years he was walked into an auditorium with only a loincloth and crutches and presented to an audience of medical doctors curious about his diagnosis. He was able to take this experience full circle when, 25 years later, and this time fully clothed, he returned to the hospital and gave a lecture to the hospital doctors and medical staff about the treatment and importance of being sensitive to the care of their patient.



Another part of Tomas' hospital education came from the fellow polio victims he met and spent a lot of time with. One of his best friends was a man "In The Iron Lung," who could never leave his hospital bed and required the use of an iron lung to breathe. At that time there were no back up systems for electricity in the hospital so it was known that if the electricity failed in the hospital he would not be able to breathe without the assistance of this machine and would

die. He could only move his toes that stuck out of this machine but with the use of mirrors and a lot of coordination, he would spend his time painting small murals, landscapes mostly, or making jewelry with his feet and toes. Tomas would watch him for hours and think how lucky Tomas himself was to be mobile. People like him served as his role models in Tomas' life. They taught Tomas to appreciate the blessings he had and not to dwell on the things he didn't have. Tomas had been one of the "lucky" ones to survive. He remembers another friend who every time he came to the hospital would have another part of his body amputated. It was the first time he learned about the disease of cancer.

Tomas was one of the first children with Polio to be mainstreamed in Public School. The local school district had refused him entry because of his illness. His mother advocated for Tomas and refused any education alternatives. In junior high school kids were pretty cruel to him. Mostly because they were afraid of Tomas, and what was wrong with the way he looked. "Like any

other kid I wanted to belong but was made to feel not good enough because I looked and walked differently.” For three summers Tomas went to summer camps for children with disabilities. In fact, he was one of the least disabled in the group. He had never had that experience and made him aware of the life of living as a disabled person and many of the choices that either we make for ourselves or others make for us about our lives. He decided that he was going to take as much of his own power as he could possibly use and not look to others to validate who he was. “Because of the love and faith that my family, especially my Mother and Father and brothers and sister, I knew that I had only the boundaries I put in front of me to hold me back.” He believed that is what helped him to survive and maybe even enjoy high school.

In high school he tried to fit in as normally as possible. Tomas learned that if you were on three teams in high school you could “letter” in sports, so he became the ball boy on the basketball team, the scorer on the baseball team, and the towel boy on the wrestling team to get his letter at Sierra Vista High School, in Baldwin Park, CA. The message growing up from his family was that he was no different than any of the other brothers and sister except for his physical limitations. This was the message of many who had Polio. The reality was that this was not always so. FDR (Franklin Delano Roosevelt) for example, did so much to support the search for a Polio cure; however he also did so much to deny the illness. Tomas says there are only 3 pictures of FDR in wheelchair. Tremendous efforts were taken to keep his Polio secret from the public. He is known as a hero today because of what he suffered, but the message of deniability and the pressure to “be normal” was also the message given to many Polio “survivors” like Tomas. Many of the Polio survivors never fully received support and to this day have suffered tremendous shame, stigma, and frustration that the disease that millions suffered has been forgotten or not recognized for the impact that it still has on individuals and the world today.

To this day Tomas is unable to walk without crutches and a long leg brace on his left leg. His present symptoms are called “Post Polio Syndrome.” This syndrome represents the chronological and developmental impact of the disease over time as these symptoms may prematurely lead to further physical and mental conditions of inability.

During 1950 Dr. Jonas Salk was still 2 years away from field-testing, and four years away from giving the Salk vaccine to himself and his own children. Over 33,000 people contracted the disease that year. After the Salk vaccine was introduced in America, the contagion rate had been cut in half within the first ten years. By 1974 only 7 new cases had been identified in this country. We in Rotary know how, except for those few countries in Africa and Asia, it has almost been eradicated in the world.

Despite the handicap that Polio dealt Tomas he was able to earn his A.A. degree from Mt San Antonio Community College in 1970, his B.A. from Cal State University in 1972, and his Ph.D in Clinical Psychology at the University of Michigan in 1979. Along the way he married in 1973 and has three children, a girl born in 1982, and twins (a boy and girl) born two years later. There are challenges in everyone’s life. How you deal with those challenges, how you can set goals and turn negatives into positives says a lot about what kind of person you are.

News and Guests from Last Malibu Rotary Club Meeting

President Pro Tem David Baird said he represented Pepperdine University the past week in Washington DC at a meeting of college administrators faith based colleges in the Eisenhower Office Building. David joked that they usually only expect 20 or so people at this event, but this year there were 90, and so they didn't serve lunch to the group. They did, however, adjourn to the new Pepperdine campus on Pennsylvania Ave, one of the few non-government buildings on that famous street.

Malibu Rotary Club President Bill Wishard representing Malibu Rotary Club at the Rotary International Convention in Bangkok last week and was in Indianapolis this week. In conversation with Bill this week he said that the Pepperdine Psi Upsilon fraternity won an award for the largest contribution to a cause in fraternities across America. They had contributed \$7500 to the Sam Schmidt Paralysis Foundation (formerly the Christopher Reeves Foundation). Schmidt is a Pepperdine Graduate and former Indy 500 Driver who suffered a horrendous crash in the year 2000 which rendered him a quadriplegic. He still became a successful businessman with Sam Schmidt Motorsports, and also the head of the foundation that bears his name. Three members of the Pepperdine Psi U's will be coming to Indianapolis this month to receive an award for their fund raising. Before he left Bill said it is important that several officers of the Malibu Rotary Club attend the Rotary District Assembly the morning of June 2 at the Carson Center. The theme for the new Rotary year will be "Peace Through Service." Bill will be talking about his experience at the RI convention at next week's Malibu Rotary Club meeting.

Maggie Luckerath talked about the Fund Raiser Polo Match for Safety Harbor Kids that will be held June 9th at the Will Rogers Polo grounds in Pacific Palisades. In addition Maggie talked about another New Generations project she is involved with. In an e-mail she wrote, "I will be filling up with soil and planting at the Boys and Girls Club the large planters with vegetable plants on Friday. Although I am a farm girl from Lancaster County, Pa with a "green thumb" I have asked Shelby Basso, prior owner of Trancas Nursery who is a Master Gardener to assist in this project. Shelby and I are both excited about helping the kids with this project."

Geoff Ortiz volunteered to represent the Malibu Rotary Club at the Malibu High School awards ceremony on May 29 and will present two \$500 scholarship checks from the Malibu Rotary Club to 2 students at the school at the evening ceremony.

Yuri Katz, a real estate agent, who works with **Donna Bohana**, was again guest at the May 16th Malibu Rotary Club meeting.

Safety Harbor Kids May Fundraiser at the Polo Grounds

To Benefit Orphans, Foster and Homeless Children

Join Safety Harbor Kids at [Will Rodgers Polo Field](#) to watch the game of kings while indulging in spectacular food generously provided by [Taste at the Palisades](#).

2012 Event to be held at Will Rogers State Historic Park
1501 Will Rogers State Park Road
Pacific Palisades, CA 90272

1:00am Red Carpet and Goodwill Ambassador Awards Ceremony

2:00pm Polo Match, Dining & Wine Tasting

Join, attend or sponsor a child [click here](#) or call today 800.277.0497

"In seven years at the home, I have never seen such a dramatic change upon these children after they attended your events"

JC Mazdar, director at Hathaway-Sycamores

ADVANCED DISCOUNT PURCHASE AVAILABLE MAY 12th-19th only!

Ticket Type	Sales End	Price
<i>Reserved Admission</i> <i>Admission to Polo Club & Match</i> <i>take your picture on the Red Carpet,</i> <i>live Jazz music. Lunch, Wine, Cocktails</i> <i>Parking not included \$12 to State Park</i> <i>Event from 1-6pm.</i>	<i>June 8th by 5pm</i>	\$95 Buy Tickets \$75.00 before 5/19

Malibu Rotary Club International Projects in Puerto Rico

With matching grants from The Rotary Foundation, Rotary District 5280 (District Designated Funds [DDF]), and in partnership with other Rotary clubs in Rotary District 5280 and host clubs in Puerto Rico, the Malibu Rotary Club is involved in two humanitarian international projects in Puerto Rico in 2012. Barbara Riley (front row third from left) represented the Malibu Rotary Club at the *Centro Geriátrico San Rafael*, Arecibo, PR Rotary Project in February, 2012. Malibu Rotary was one of the lead sponsors of the project, along with 4 other Rotary Clubs from Los Angeles, CA Rotary District 5280 who also sent representatives.

Malibu Rotary Club was also a sponsor of a second project, *Hogar Santísima Trinidad* (HST) in Barrio Macarabones, Toa Alta, Puerto Rico which involves rehabilitating alcohol and drug abusers at the HST Center to train for job skills and also educate in recycling and train in solid waste management.

More on Rotary District 5280's humanitarian trip to Puerto Rico can be seen at <http://www.facebook.com/PuertoRico5280>.

In the *Centro Geriatrico San Rafael, Inc* in Arecibo, Puerto Rico project the Malibu Rotary Club is the PRIMARY INTERNATIONAL PARTNER. 5 Rotary Clubs from Los Angeles along with Rotary Foundation and the host Arecibo Rotary Club has helped the senior residential center purchase needed maintenance and repair tools, 8 energy efficient air conditioning units and a commercial sliding gate opener. This is a geriatric home for indigents founded in 1925. The Arecibo Rotary Club has been supporting them since 1935. This project costs \$15,585.00 of which the Malibu Rotary Club and the Westchester Rotary Club have given \$1170.00 each. Other partner clubs are Culver City, Wilmington, along with the host Rotary Club of Arecibo.

The most ambitious project (*Hogar Santísima Trinidad* [HST] in Barrio Macarabones, Toa Alta, Puerto Rico) involves rehabilitating alcohol and drug abusers at the HST Center (who are also highly likely to have HIV) to train for job skills and also educate in recycling and train in solid waste management. HST is a private community based non-profit organization, offering a safe residential rehabilitation and treatment program to 35 young males addicted to drugs and /or alcohol, established in 1993. HST depends on income from their semi-industrial aluminum and metal recycling and processing program. As part of their rehabilitation program, the HST implements occupational, physical and work therapies through their Mobile Recycling Center Program (MRCP). It consists in the training of patients in the use of a fixed industrial recycling unit permanently located at the Center, where they learn how to process and recycle aluminum, car batteries, diverse metals and other materials under the close supervision of trained supervisors. They also pickup recyclable materials in nearby communities to process at the center. The project also addresses a problem of waste management in Puerto Rico. Studies done by the US Environmental Protection Agency have revealed that improper or insufficient capacity to dispose of solid waste in Puerto Rico has created public health problems. The

management and disposal of solid waste in the Island has long been a challenge, aggravated by the limited space available due to its geographical size, roughly 100 mi by 35 mi, and its delicately balanced ecosystem and the large amount of solid waste generated, at 4,000,000 tons per year. Puerto Rico's residents generate more waste than people living on the mainland and recycling rates are lower. Much of Puerto Rico's waste ends up in landfills, most of which do not comply with local and federal governments' landfill requirements. The cost of HST Rotary project in Puerto Rico is \$22,570. The primary international club sponsoring this project is the Westchester Rotary Club. Malibu Rotary Club is an equal share holder with the Westchester Rotary Club, with each club contributing \$1570.00. Besides the host Rotary Club of Santurce, the Rotary Club of Torrance-Lomita is a partner in this project.



Malibu Rotary Club is Official Sponsor of Smile Trek

Marine Sargent Winston Fiore Started his 5,000 mile Cross Country Motorcycle Trip in Malibu. His purpose is to bring awareness of children's cleft palate and raise money for the International Children's Surgical Foundation. The organization provides surgery, training for 3rd world surgeons, plus follow-up care for surgical correction of children's cleft palate disease. The US trip was in preparation for a 5,000 mile walking trip

across Southeast Asia which he began in September. Before he left he explained " My route will take me through eight different countries, beginning and ending in Singapore, and the yearlong trek will be an ongoing effort to raise funds for the ICSF and awareness for children living with clefts in the developing world. I chose to base this trip in Southeast Asia because of the region's high prevalence of cleft births."

Malibu Rotary Club is one of his sponsors. One surgery costs \$240.

See Winston's blog at <http://www.smiletrek.org> (which includes multiple videos) as he travels across the world. As of April 11th he had collected \$40,404 for ICSF, over 81% his goal of \$50,000.

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 held at 7:30 a.m. Wednesdays in Fireside Room of Pepperdine University unless otherwise noted)

May 23 2012

William Wishard

"Impressions of the 2012 Rotary International Convention in Bangkok"

Malibu Rotary Club President and President-Elect Bill Wishard will present his experiences and impressions from 2012 Rotary International Convention which he attended this month.

May 30 2012

Dennis Torres

"The Art of Negotiation"

Malibu Rotary Club Past President and current Executive Director of Real Estate and Adjunct Professor of Negotiation, Dispute Resolution and Critical Thinking at Pepperdine University Dennis Torres will speak on the Art of Negotiation at the Malibu Rotary Club meeting at 7:30 a.m. May 30th in the Fireside Room of Pepperdine University.

Jun 20 2012

Barbara J Riley

"Rotary District Humanitarian Trip to Puerto Rico"

The Malbu Rotary Club is a co-sponsor in two humanitarian projects in Puerto Rico. Barbara Riley represented the Malibu Rotary Club at Rotary District 5280 Humanitarian Trip to Puerto Rico in February to visit these projects and will describe her experience at the Malibu Rotary Club meeting June 20.

Jun 27 2012

Prof. dr. George Pavlakos

"Global Law: obligations of justice beyond the borders of the nation state"

Dr George Pavlakos is Research Chair in Globalisation and Legal Theory, Universiteit Antwerpen/Belgium, Director Centre for Law and Cosmopolitan Values <http://www.lcv.ua.ac.be> as well as Professor of Globalisation and Legal Theory, University of Glasgow/Scotland. He is taking a sabbatical year lecturing and studying at UCLA and the Malibu Rotary Club is fortunate to have this international scholar of law speak at our club June 27 on Global Law: obligations of justice beyond the borders of the nation state.