



*The Award Winning*

Malibu Rotary Club Surfwriter

May 27, 2015

Official Newsletter of the Rotary Club of Malibu  
Malibu Rotary Club President Margo Neal

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 Newest Malibu Rotarian Bianca Torrence Tells How She Left Her Initial Home in the Peruvian Andes and after a stint in Okinawa Japan and Owner/Stylist of the Bang Bang Salon in Northridge, California Has Become Senior Real Estate Specialist in Malibu.**
- **Next Week Malibu Rotary Club Meeting will be held June 3 in Pepperdine University Main Campus FIRESIDE ROOM. DO NOT GO TO PEPPERDINE Malibu Upper Drescher Graduate Campus. Meeting in Fireside Room will be Club Assembly led by Bob Syvertsen with fellowship at 11:30 a.m and meeting starting at 12:00 noon. If there is another group in Fireside Room then meeting will be adjoining Faculty Dining Room.**
- **Other News and Guests at Malibu Rotary Club**
- **Malibu Rotary Club Supports RainCatcher.**

- Check **Calendar** on Malibu Rotary website [www.maliburotary.org](http://www.maliburotary.org)
- Rotary International Website: [www.Rotary.org](http://www.Rotary.org)
- Rotary District 5280 Website: [www.rotary5280.org/](http://www.rotary5280.org/)
- RI President (2014-2015) Gary CK Huang
- Rotary District 5280 Governor (2014-2015): Elsa Gilham

**Newest Malibu Rotarian Bianca Torrence Tells How She Left Her Initial Home in the Peruvian Andes and after a stint in Okinawa Japan and Owner/Stylist of the Bang Bang Salon in Northridge, California Has Become Senior Real Estate Specialist in Malibu.**



**Bianca Torrence is now a Senior Real Estate Specialist at RF/Max Elite in Malibu, and at the Malibu Rotary Club May 27 she talked about her long road to get there.**

*Editors Note-- Some of the best programs one can hear at a Rotary Club meeting is when members talk about their own lives, in what is called "Craft Talk". Bianca Torrence's life has taken many twists and turns, which turned into a very compelling talk. Since she had written it all down I asked Bianca to give me the transcript (makes my job easier) and here it is:*

I was born in Peru in a small town called Huancayo, located in the central Andes of Peru. The altitude there is approx. (3,259 m) 10,692' feet.

I come from a big family. I'm #8 the youngest of my siblings

Growing up in Peru was nice; the town where I am from the indigenous population is high approx... 75%

I was very fortunate to have wonderful parents my father was in politics; he served as city mayor and was also a governor. My mother was a school teacher. They are no longer with me but they are in spirit.

By the time I was 3 years old two of my sisters had already married. My oldest sister married a Peruvian man who was serving in the US air force so she moved to the US. My father decided to send the second oldest to study in the US and got her a student visa.

My parents would fly twice a year to check on my two sisters living in the US sisters, soon enough my father fell in love with America. My father was tired of the corrupted government in Peru and the system there was no security there was a lot of terrorism this was in the late 70's so he tried relentlessly to get permanent residency for the last three children because the rest were already set either married or in a University. The residence was denied the first time but he did not give up he decided to sell all of the properties he had so he can prove that we would not be a burden to the State and he succeeded.

So my journey to the Us began in 1980, My dad came home one day and said we are moving to America I had no say in it, I was only 13 I hardly spoke any English. When I arrived my older sisters who I hardly knew came to pick us up at the airport. My parents enrolled me at Reseda High School where I attended

ESL classes English as a second language. It was very interesting; I met other kids like me, from Egypt, Brazil, Korea, Lebanon, and Persia etc. It was fun for 6 months, until I was transferred to regular classes, boy did I struggle with the language I

was extremely shy I could do well grammatically but speaking it was a different story.

Then after one year my parents decided to travel abroad to Europe and left my brother and my sister at the care of my older sisters so I had to transfer and attend Agoura High. After that one year I came back to Reseda High and graduated High School from there.

I met my husband at Pierce College and he decided to join the Navy and was transferred to San Diego naval base we got married and I moved to San Diego and was going to enroll in a nursing program at San Diego city College but the program got full and they told me I had to wait till next semester I did not want to waste time so meantime I enrolled in a cosmetology program that the college offered and ended up getting my license and becoming a cosmetologist.

My husband got orders to go to Okinawa Japan so we got to live there for a year and it was an incredible experience. We got to choose to live on base or off base we decided to live off base and submerge ourselves into the Japanese culture. I was only 19 my husband was 21 very tall and handsome everywhere we went people would treat us like celebrity, it really was awesome. Since we lived in town we got to make friends with the locals who were very friendly and actually the restaurant owners that we frequented sort of adopted us. We were part of their family they included us in all the family events. My son was born in Okinawa when he turned 3 months old we got transferred back to San Diego for 2 more years. After that we moved to Agoura and Scott got a job in Los Robles Hospital in Thousand Oaks and that is where my daughter was born. Three years later he passed away unexpectedly with a brain aneurism. I was glad I had family nearby because it was devastating, my son was six at the time my daughter was 3 and I was 26 years old. It was hard but I survived, couldn't have done it without my family's support.

Later on I remarried a wonderful man who was much older but you know what they say love is blind and I or we did not see the age difference he was 25 years

my senior. I felt loved and protected my kids needed a father figure and he was good to them. My 2nd husband had a commercial multi-tenant building in

Northridge the recession hit in the early 90s and he lost most of his tenants he had 90% vacancy rate so he was having financial trouble and he would think what can I do with this 20k sqft building with not much overhead so he decided to put a shooting range he studied the business for a few months and since he was also a general contractor he figure a way and built the shooting Range. It was called the Northridge Pistol and Rifle indoor shooting range. He gave me a frontage space and told me “you can do whatever you want with this space”, so I decided to open my beauty Salon and it was called the Bang Bang hair studio, it was quite a unique set up, we were busy however, I realized that having a salon was taking a lot of time away from my kids, I had people working for me but if they did not show up I had to run shop regardless. Lucky for me someone came in one day and offered to buy the Salon so I sold it. My husband asked me to administrate the office and all the paperwork for the shooting range business this way I had more time for my kids. I enjoyed working at the shooting range until we decided to close shop.

I always had an interest in Real Estate and decided to study and get my license. In 1999 I went and Joined RE/MAX to do Real Estate this gave me enough flexibility to attend all my kids’ activities which I really enjoyed. Life was good. I was happy my parents lived nearby in Tarzana my sisters in Agoura and Westlake village we are a close happy family

I had my share of losses I guess that is inevitable when you have a big family. I lost my Dad to cancer of the esophagus in 1996, 10 years later in 2006 I would lose one of my oldest and favorite sister, she was waiting for a liver transplant for 2 years and that was hard watching her die slowly it was very painful, and one year after that in 2007 I lost my mother in a very tragic way. My mother was very loved by friends and family she helped the poor families and orphan children in Peru sending money and getting involved raising funds. We honor the memory of our beloved Mother Rosa Octavila and wished to continue her legacy to help the children in need and formed a non-profit organization to help the underprivileged children in Peru., since we started this endeavor the attendance in school has

increased, children are performing better with their academics as they are not as malnourished. We have several fundraising events during the year and the whole family helps and participates to make the events a success. My children are very supportive I was blessed with two very kind and wonderful kids, my son David is an elite athlete graduated from Berkeley and my daughter is an amazing oil painting artist currently attending CSUN with a major in Phycology, she will be graduating this Year. I am a very proud Mom.

Regarding my real estate career I started late 1999 and pretty soon I became a top producer in my office. I was really busy I had a network of builders and I was listing all new construction homes for the most part, also got a lot of referrals I was busy and was making good money. Then when market collapsed in 2007 and that is the year that my mother passed it was tough I took a year off . Then a year later I started a team at Remax and all we did is help families avoid foreclosure for 3 years we were doing a lot of short sales homeowners were trying to hold on to their underwater properties with horrible loans. There were a lot of scams going around, taking money from this poor people to do their loan modification, many families had reduced income but they would want to hold on to their property no matter what, regardless Lenders have to prove that you make at least 3 times more than what your mortgage is. This period of time was really tough, there were a lot of emotions involved in the transactions, a lot of scams and people lost confidence they did not know who to trust.

Around 2010 I started volunteering with LANHS Los Angeles neighborhood housing services they were doing a lot of foreclosure prevention classes and their mission was and is to qualify and educate first time buyers before they purchase a home. This organization has been helping homeowners for 30 years and at the height of the crisis their foreclosure percentage rate was only 1%. So it really pays to educate first time buyers. The ultimate American Dream is to own a home however some people go in it without really knowing what they are signing.

Now that I have moved to Malibu and thought well I have 15 years of experience selling real estate I can sell anywhere, however I found out that the Malibu market is a challenging market to break into. There are many stablished agents

that grew up in this area for me is tough especially because I am new to this area it is a small community, people do not know me yet. It will take time and perseverance but I know people will get to know me with time and they will see the value that I offer and can bring to the table weather it is working with a seller or helping a buyer with a home purchase. I am here in Malibu to stay, I love the people, the community, the beaches and the tranquility that comes with it.

Life has its peaks and valleys and Life sometimes gives you lemons but the art is learning how to make lemonade

Thank you for listening to my story.

*Additional Editors note: Bianca's son **David Torrence** (born 26 November 1985) is an elite American middle-distance runner and the current indoor American record holder in the 1000 meters. In 2012, he won the Falmouth Mile with a time of 3:55.79. Later that year, he set a personal best (that remains as his personal best today) in the mile at the **Pre Classic** with a 3:52.01, making him the fastest American that year in the mile. He is currently in Flagstaff doing altitude training. If he is available we hope to have him as the Malibu Rotary Club speaker June 10<sup>th</sup>.*

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

The Demotion Party for Margo, originally scheduled for July 1 has been changed to June 24<sup>th</sup>. It turns out Margo will not be available on July 1, so it's a good thing we asked her when would be a good time for her since it will be a dinner party honoring her. David Zielski is working on a venue. When this is confirmed it will be posted on our website. On the day of the demotion party there will be no noon club meeting at Pepperdine University.

At the Malibu Rotary club assembly on June 3 Margo would like consideration given to a club donation toward Nepal relief.

## **Guests**

Guests at the May 27<sup>th</sup> Malibu Rotary Club meeting were a past Rotary district governor from Sioux Falls South Dakota who came late and left early, attending another meeting at Pepperdine, didn't get his name; and frequent guest **Chris Bashaw** from the Malibu Rotary Surfside News.

## **Bill Wishard, Rotary District Special Olympics Chair**

Bill Wishard is coordinating Rotary District efforts for the Special Olympics games being staged in Los Angeles July 25 - August 2, 2015. People in Los Angeles, and especially Rotarians, can get involved. Bill spoke about this at the Rotary District Breakfast March 31. The Special Olympics will have 7,000 athletes from 177 countries.

Rotarians to participate as volunteers “Fans in the Stands,” or by sponsoring an athlete. It free to go to the games, and individual Rotary Clubs should each of a captain to have club members go to the sporting events together for a fun group experience. The Rotary District is planning to have about 1000 people go to the Opening Ceremonies which are going to be held July 25 at 5:00 p.m. at the Los Angeles Memorial Coliseum. Tickets for the opening ceremonies cost from \$30.00 to \$120 each. It is hoped that Rotarians will have a special section, have special event t-shirts identifying them as Rotarians, and hopefully will be able to charter special buses. Details about all this should be available in the near future. Sponsoring an athlete financially costs \$2500. Some large clubs in District 5280, LA 5 and Wilshire Rotary Clubs have done this. For smaller clubs, like the Malibu Rotary Club, they can join with other clubs to raise the \$2500. The Malibu Rotary Club is contributing \$500, and will join with another club to support an athlete.

### **Malibu Rotary Club Supports RainCatcher**

Clean drinking water is a problem affecting millions of people around the world. A Malibu company, RainCatcher, is trying to solve the problem in an efficient manner. Much of their work has been in Africa. The Malibu Rotary Club along with the Rotary Clubs of Beverly Hills, CA USA and the Rotary

Club of Entebbe, Uganda has applied for a Rotary Foundation Grant to assist Raincatcher. There are several videos available on You Tube that show the amazing things Raincatcher is doing bringing clean drinking water to places in Uganda and Kenya where there was previously no clean drinking water.

David Zielski, Executive Director of Raincatcher, makes regular trips to Uganda and Kenya to do Raincatcher installations and maintenance. In February The latest video showing what David and the Raincatcher people are doing in Africa was shown at the Malibu Rotary Club meeting on August 20. A link to the video is now on the Maliburotary.org website. The direct link to the video is at:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=59rzOcM-RL0&list=UUFetq8NgjhXhtkVf0idcQUg>



# Calendar (for details on these programs see [maliburotary.org](http://maliburotary.org))

**June 3, 2015 IN FIRESIDE ROOM**

**Bob Syvertsen**

**Malibu Rotary Club Budget for 2015-2016**

**June 20<sup>th</sup>, 2015**

**Rotary District Assembly in Carson**

**June 24, 2015**

**Margo's Demotion Party Dinner (organized by President-Elect Dave Zielski)**