

The Award Winning

Malibu Rotary Club Surfwriter

November 16, 2016

Official Newsletter of the Rotary Club of Malibu

Malibu Rotary Club President of Record Bill Wishard

Malibu Rotary Club President of the Month (November) W David Baird

Malibu Rotary Club President Elect Bianca Torrence

Edited by Dr. John W. Elman

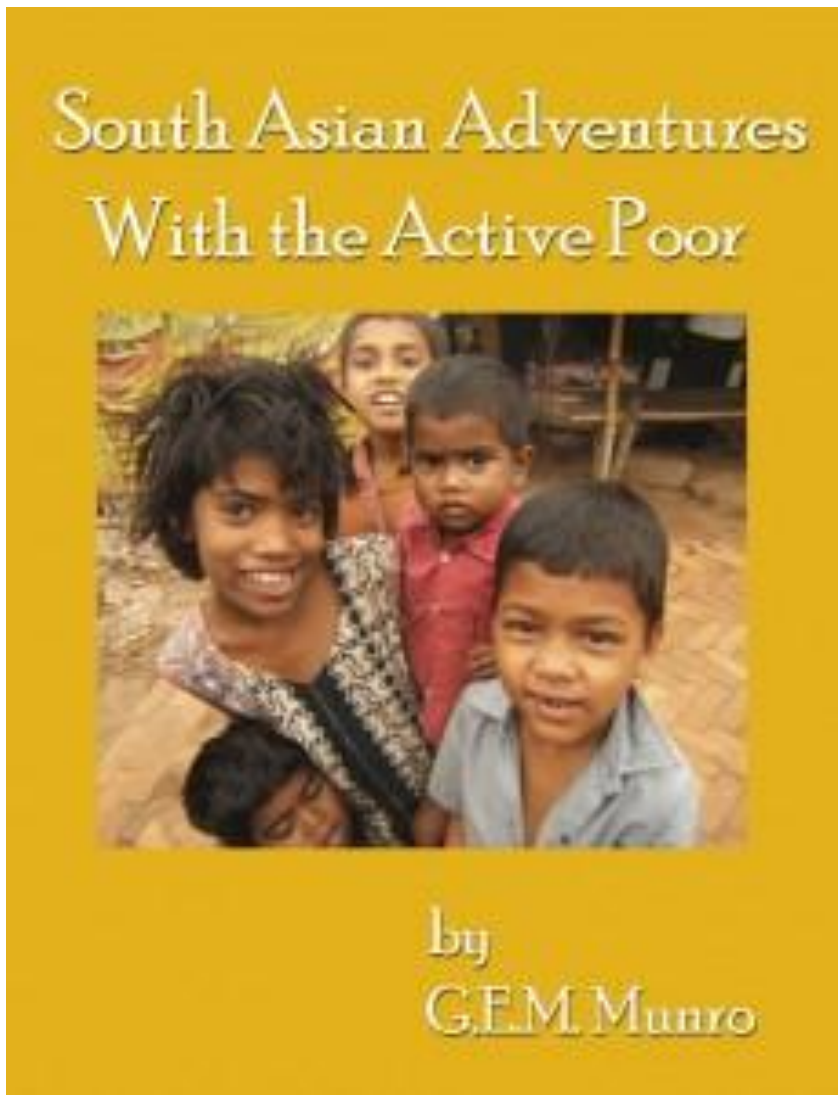
Pictures by Dr. John W. Elman

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

- **Last Week: Canadian GEM Munro, talks about Amarak Society, providing education programs to poor in Bangladesh, Pakistan and Nigeria**
- **Next Week: No meeting for the Thanksgiving Holiday**
- **November 30 Malibu Rotary Club will meet with members of 6 other Rotary Clubs at 6:00 p.m. at the Sage Brush Cantina in Calabasas---THERE WILL BE NO NOON MEETING OF THE MALIBU ROTARY CLUB AT PEPPERDINE THIS DAY—THE DINNER MEETING WITH OTHER CLUBS AT SAGEBRUSH CANTINA WILL BY THE MALIBU ROTARY CLUB MEETING OF THE DAY**
- **Next Regular Malibu Rotary Club Noon Meeting December 7 in LC 152 on the Pepperdine campus—Speaker will be Malibu Rotary Club’s newest member Teresa LeGrove, who will giving her Craft Talk**

- Rotary Action Groups—How Rotary Helps in International Disasters Like Hurricanes and Earthquakes—A presentation by Dr. Leigh Readdy Chair of Rotary Disaster Network
- Check [Calendar](#) on Malibu Rotary website www.maliburotary.org
- Rotary International Website: www.Rotary.org
- Rotary District 5280 Website: www.rotary5280.org/
- RI President (2016-2017) John F. Germ
- Rotary District 5280 Governor (2016-2017) Greg O'Brien

Canadian G.E.M. Munro, talk about Amarak Society, providing education programs to poor in Bangladesh, Pakistan and Nigeria



The bestselling book, **South Asian Adventures with the Active Poor**, by Gem Munro, is an amazing collection of true short stories about some extraordinary women and men in the slums of Bangladesh and how Amarak Society started in Bangladesh.

Climb up into Wahid's bicycle-rickshaw, and ready yourself for the ride of your life – or, rather, of Munnis's life, or Rohima's, or Amena's. Take a rare journey into the real slums of South Asia, into the secret heart of what may be the world's least known, least cosmopolitan, most surreal major city, and into the hearts of its poorest inhabitants, where struggles for survival, love and dignity don't lead to game shows, but may lead, perhaps with destiny's intervention, into one of a unique system of schools established by a Canadian family of mother, father and four children who had the double misfortune of seeing the suffering of the extremely poor at close

range and designing a program in answer that was too successful to stop. If you don't find your tour through these stories of discovery, despair, hope and heroism, "as delivered truthfully, humourously and lovingly by G.E.M. Munro", to be truly "gripping, revealing, touching and inspiring", immediately schedule an appointment with a cardiologist: your own heart may be dead.



The November 16 meeting of the Malibu Rotary Club featured a presentation by Canadian author, artist and humanitarian G.E.M Munro, who spoke about his experience in Bangladesh and showed a video (See this YouTube Video <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=j6-pvi6kMkY>) and sold many of us book that he had written *South Asian Adventures with the Active Poor* the sale of which goes to the an organization we had never heard of, The Amarak Society, which aims to solve a seemingly impossible world problem, how to teach the 70,000,000 children in the world who are too poor to go to school.

“I found this book amazing and couldn’t put it down. I salute the author and his family for their dedication and service to these poor children and their mothers.

Enlisting and training uneducated mothers and making them the vehicle to teach others is almost unbelievable. However, it is happening, and that is what makes the story about this project so fascinating.” –Wilfrid Wilkinson, Past President, Rotary International

Gem’s wife **Dr. Tanyss Munro** has devoted her life and career to improving educational opportunities for disadvantaged people across Canada and abroad. She has achieved extraordinary success in this endeavour as teacher, principal, district director, senior advisor in the federal government and with First Nations government

Tanyss and Gem Munro met in Toronto, whereupon they fell for each other hard. Soon, they departed together on an odyssey they couldn’t possibly have anticipated. They took jobs teaching in an isolated First Nation reserve in northern Alberta; the conditions they observed there, of poverty, disadvantage and despair, changed their lives forever. They became convinced that denial of normal educational opportunities was fundamental to the structure of disadvantage, and they resolved to commit themselves to readjusting and raising standards for aboriginal children. The pursuit of this objective carried them into residence in very unfortunate communities and neighbourhoods across most of Canada, before carrying them into the corridors of government and overseas.

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Their four children: Alastair, Azien, Gabriel & Grace were born in Saskatoon, SK, Fort Good Hope, NWT, Bella Coola, BC and Kamloops, BC respectively. The children absorbed principles of social responsibility when Gem and Tanyss brought their children into and made them active participants in, and contributors to, Amarak Society projects.

Amarok Society is a Canadian charity operating in Asia and Africa. Incorporated as a federally registered charity in 1992, it was founded by Dr. Tanyss Munro and her husband, G.E.M. Munro, a noted writer, as a support to their efforts to improve educational opportunity for **Aboriginal** and **First Nations** students. To avoid appearances of conflict of interest, Amarak Society suspended its activities when Dr. Munro was appointed Senior Advisor to the Minister of Indian Affairs under Prime Minister **Jean Chrétien**. The charity was revived to support the Munros' creation of educational programs in **South Asia** in partnership with **Baridhara Mohila Samobaya Samity, Ltd.**, the largest women's organization in South Asia. Amarak Society's

programs, 'Mothers of Intentions Projects', are unusual in that, in the absence of affordable educational opportunities, they train very poor mothers to be family and neighbourhood teachers.

Significant support for Amarok Society comes from [Rotary Clubs](#). It has a formal relationship with the Rotary Club of Belleville, ON, Canada and with the Rotary Club of Dhaka Mid-Town, Bangladesh, and is supported by many other Rotary Clubs in North America and the United Kingdom.

Additional support has come from the sale of a book written by G.E.M. Munro, "South Asian Adventures with the Active Poor", which gained best-seller status in Canada.

A documentary film, "Heart to Head: How Amarok Society Women are Teaching the World's Poorest Children", was completed in early 2014.

In 2013, the Munros were awarded Queen Elizabeth II Diamond Jubilee Medals in recognition of the work of Amarok Society.

Amarok Society brings a revolutionary solution to a chronic humanitarian problem.

What do you do in lands where there is no money to build schools for millions of uneducated children? How do you reach into the hearts of destitute communities to inspire lasting change in a way that's sustainable and cost-effective? How do you counteract primitive extremism where fundamentalist fanatics have enjoyed free reign?

Amarok Society effects miraculous changes in the lives of thousands of children through our unusual and daring design for educating the dwellers of desperately poor slums.

They empower mothers.

Amarok Society teaches uneducated mothers how to read and write, and then teaches the mothers to be neighbourhood teachers – educating their own and their neighbours' children every day in their homes, with astonishing result.

There are over 70,000,000 children in the world who are too poor to go to school. Thinking people will recognize this as a world problem, not a third world problem. Conventional approaches are not working for these 'bottom hundred million children' – new approaches are needed. We harness the power of mothers to effect lasting improvement in some of the poorest slums in the world, in two of the most troubled, violent and dangerous countries in the world: Bangladesh and Pakistan.

The Only Path to Peace...

The failure of humanity to educate all its children is our greatest sin of omission. One of the many, many penalties we pay for this sin is the rise of extremist violence and warfare, which is often cited as the most pressing challenge of our age. Responding to this **with** violence and warfare has been a hideous exercise in futility, and has invariably made matters yet worse. Education is the only means available to us by which we may defeat the objectives of extremists.

Gem Munro: "If we really mean to create peace in the world, we must stop rattling sabres and start ringing school bells."

Gem was told by others what he and his wife sought to do was impossible. Go into the poorest of the poor nation, in dangerous slums, and teach Muslim women who were not allowed to go to school even if they wanted to? Gem was told it would be impossible to get into or out of these neighborhoods. .

When they finally got in, the women knew nothing about reading or writing. They had to teach them how to hold a pencil. Their vocabulary had no more than 500 words (most of us have a vocabulary of over 1500 words).

Gem and his wife knew that English was the most important language to know in the world—people who speak it are more likely to get jobs. They also reasoned that the more you knew about the world the better they would like it. They taught conflict resolution, arithmetic, and birth control. Bangladesh has a population of 180 million people living in an area that is about 1/3 the size of California. Living space was limited, people, especially the women, were in despair. They married when they were 11 or 12 years old and if they had a dozen children maybe half of them would survive and maybe one could be successful at something.

Amarok Society is more than just an international charity: it's actually an international coalition of devoted supporters and courageous women who, everyday, defy the immediate threats of prejudice, intolerance and extremism in order to learn and then teach the children of their communities, and, subsequently, deny extremists the unreasoning support and blind obedience absolutely necessary to their success.

The bravest women you've never known, battling ignorance behind enemy

lines...

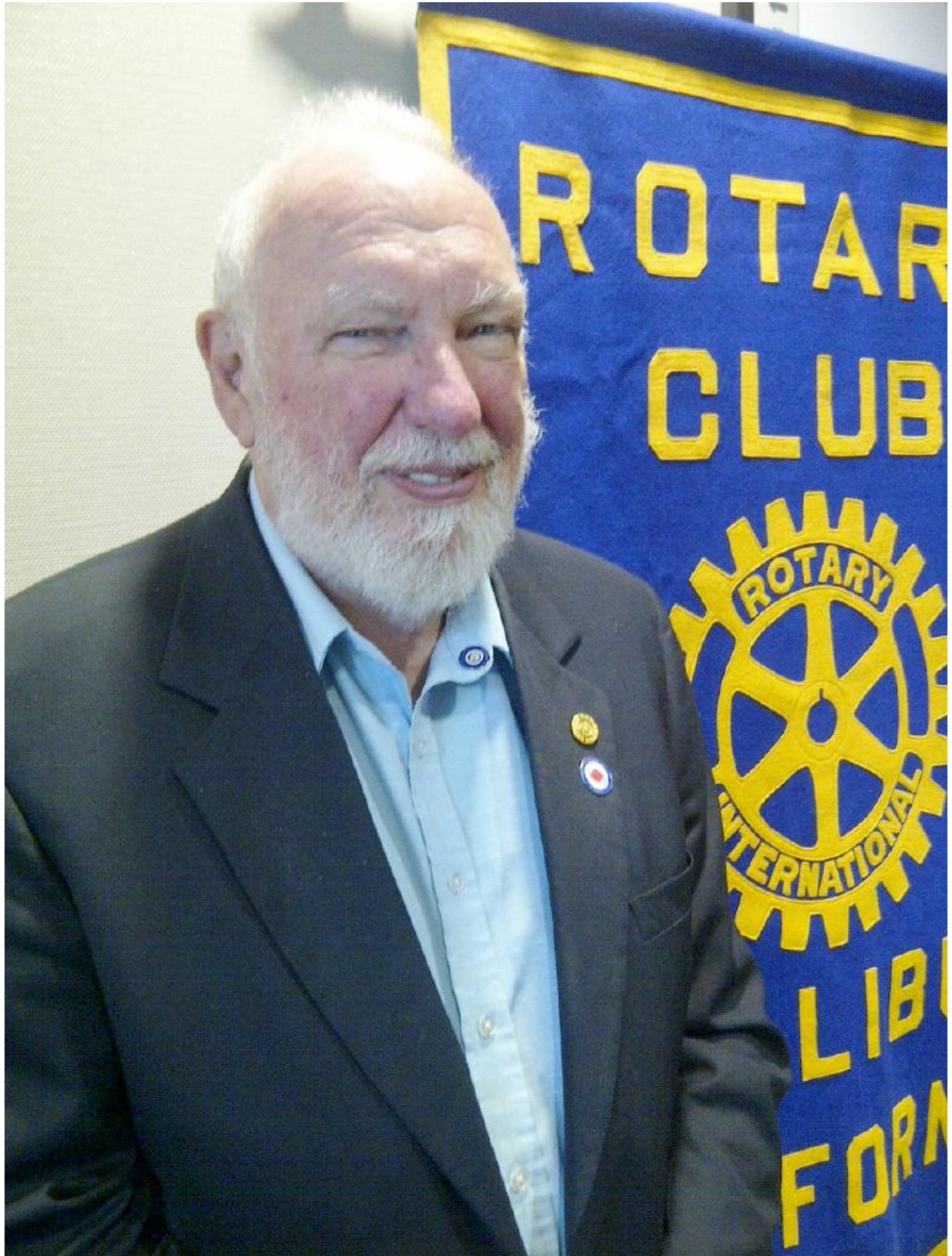
“We would love to bring you inside the lives of the heroic mothers with whom we work, but it's obvious a website is not the way to do it. Of course, we're in the habit of coming up with more effective alternatives.... So, if you're looking for an engaging, humorous book that will transport your heart into a strange land, we recommend you buy our book of true stories set in these slums. ALL (and we do mean 100%) profits from book sales go toward Amarok Society – allowing more mothers to join our schools to bring education to more children.”

At the Malibu Rotary Club meeting there were questions about the husbands of these women. Wouldn't they be upset by people coming into their home and teaching their wives? The answer is yes they were, but later they could be seen outside these home classrooms also learning the lessons, for they too were illiterate, and could see the benefit in learning to read.

GEM's presentation was one of the most worthwhile, inspiring and unforgettable we've seen at a Rotary meeting. Besides a great writer, and artist (Gem drew sketches in the book) Gem and a wonderful and humorous speaker.

You can learn more about the Amrok Society at <http://amaroksociety.org/> .

**Rotary Action Groups—How Rotary Helps in International
Disasters Like Hurricanes and Earthquakes—A presentation by Dr.
Leigh Readdy Chair of Rotary Disaster Network**



Dr. Leigh Readdy of the Rotary Club of Lake Forest Washington is a member of the Rotary International Action Group in charge of International Distasters. He visited the Malibu Rotary Club on November 16 to talk about how Rotary helps in international distasters.

He explained that there are special groups in Rotary that coordinatates with other agencies to provide relief in disasters. Shelter Box is supported by Rotary but separate from Rotary. It can provide temporary housing and supplies and a large tent that can provide temporary housing form 10 people.

Haiti was still recovering from the 2010 earthquake when Hurricane Matthew hit with additional killed and injured and more structure damage.

HOW YOU CAN HELP

A special Donor Advised Fund has been set up specifically for Haiti. This fund HURRICANE EMERGENCY RELIEF-DAF is administered by The Rotary Foundation with guidance from Rotarians experienced with Haiti's special disaster reacovery needs.

For information on this and other disasters requiring assistance please check out the website: <http://www.dna-rag.com> or contact Dr. Leigh A. Readdy@readdyla@aol.com.

Dr Readdy also brought a brochure about requests from Nepal. The message from Nepal was from Keshav Kunwar, Nepal Rotary District Governor (dgkeshav1516@rotary3292.org) and Bob Sturart, who is Past Rotary International Director (rsturart@bhslaw.com) which stated while Nepal prides itself on hospitality since the earthquake there, they have no home to hours themselves or any guests. They are requesting help to rebuild.

Other News And Guests at the Last Malibu Rotary Club Meeting

Malibu Presbyterian Church Thanksgiving Dinner on November 17



Bianca Torrence was organizing participation of Malibu Rotarians in the SOS Thanksgiving Dinner held November 17 at the Malibu Presbyterian Like the Thanksgiving dinners the Malibu Rotary Club participated in for years with the SOS this dinner was 6:00 p.m. the week before Thanksgiving, this year at 6:00 p.m. at the Malibu Presbyterian Church on Malibu Canyon Road. Several Rotarians have volunteered. Tom Boss volunteered turkey, David Baird ham, Bill Wishard pie, Teresa LeGrove salad, Carlye Rudkin ham. Tom and David B volunteered to serve.

Guests

Tom Bos the Past Rotary District Governor from Holland Michigan was only visitor, although he attends more of our meetings than many Malibu Rotary Club members

Special 6 Club Rotary meeting November 30

November 30 6:00 p.m. Rotary District Assistant Governor Richard Miller has arranged for Special Dinner Meeting of 6 Rotary Clubs (including Malibu RC) at the Sagebrush Cantina, 23527 Calabasas Rd, Calabasas, CA 91302. Cost is dinner is \$25.00. (no Malibu Rotary noon meeting at Pepperdine that day). Malibu Rotarians should RSVP and pay to our Treasurer Carlye Rudkin.

Malibu Rotary Club Holiday Party

- Carlye has confirmed December 14 Holiday Party in Wine Room in Tra di Noi Restaurant at Malibu Country Mart at 6:00 p.m. (no noon meeting)—Cost of \$37.00/person includes tax and tip. Menu is salad, entrée choice of Chicken Marsala or Salmone, and Tiramisu for desert. Carlye may throw in a bottle or 2 of her Malibu wine. RSVP to Carlye Rudkin. Space limited to first 20.

Rotary District Events

Humanitarian Trip to Merida, Mexico will take place January 25-30 2017, and will feature Rotarians participating in 7 different humanitarian projects. Margo is going on trip. She said that the district is asking each Rotary Club in the Los Angeles district to contribute something towards a Rotary project in Merida.

Rotary District Leadership Skills Courses.will take place February 4 and 11th

Malibu Rotary Club Presidents of the Month (2016-2017)

Malibu Rotary Club President of Record (2016-17) Bill Wishard

August 2016-----Margo Neal

September 2016—David Zielski

October 2016-----John Elman

November 2016—W. David Baird

December 2016—Bill Wishard
January 2017—Robert "Bob" Syvertsen
February 2017—John Elman
March 2017—W. David Baird
April 2017—Margo Neal
May 2017—Robert "Bob" Syvertsen
June 2017—David Zielski

CALENDAR (see up to date calendar on maliburotary.org)

- **November 23 No Meeting**
- **November 30 6:00 p.m. Rotary District Assistant Governor Richard Miller has arranged for Special Dinner Meeting of 6 Rotary Clubs (including Malibu RC) at the Sagebrush Cantina, 23527 Calabasas Rd, Calabasas, CA 91302. Cost is dinner is \$25.00. (no Malibu Rotary noon meeting at Pepperdine that day). Malibu Rotarians should RSVP and pay to our Treasurer Carlye Rudkin.**
- **December 7 Teresa LeGrove Craft Talk**
- **December 14 Holiday Party in Wine Room in Tra di Noi Restaurant at Malibu Country Mart at 6:00 p.m. (no noon meeting)—Cost of \$37.00/person includes tax and tip. Menu is salad, entrée choice of Chicken Marsala or Salmone, and Tiramisu for desert. Carlye may throw in a bottle or 2 of her Malibu wine. RSVP to Carlye Rudkin. Space limited to first 20.**
- **December 21 and 28 No meetings**
- **January 18 2017 Ken Chong on “Membership”-- Ken Chong is Past President of LA 5 and membership chair Rotary District 5280. He was featured speaker at Governor Elect Seminar in San Diego because of his creative ideas.**