



Malibu Rotary Club Surfwriter

October 13, 2010

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

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Pictures by Dr John W. Elman

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- **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 (2010-2011) Ray Klinginsmith**
- **Rotary District 5280 Governor (2010-2011): Doug Baker**

Shari Sinwelski and John McGann Talk about Didi Hirsch Mental Health Services and Suicide Prevention



Speakers at the October 13 meeting of the Malibu Rotary Club meeting were Shari Sinwelski, MS/EdS, Director of Program Development for the Suicide Prevention Center of Didi Hirsch Mental Health Services and **John P. McGann, C.P.A.**, Vice President of Finance and Administration for the Didi Hirsch

Community Mental Health Center, which is headquartered in Culver City, California.

Besides giving presentations to the public about what the Suicide Prevention Center does as part of its Community Outreach program, Shari is a Suicide Prevention Trainer.

Established in 1942, Didi Hirsch Mental Health Services is one of the oldest and largest mental health centers in Los Angeles County. It provides a broad array of mental health and substance abuse treatment services to 44,000 people at nine sites each year. It has 400 employees and 200 volunteers. McGann told us that it originally started to aid soldiers returning from World War II and today its annual budget today is \$26 million.

One of the founders of the Suicide Prevention Center, Robert E Litman, MD, died in February this year. *The Los Angeles Times* wrote about Dr Litman and the early days of the Suicide Prevention Center on Mar 7, 2010:

“In 1958, when research into suicide was almost nonexistent and largely discouraged, the Los Angeles Suicide Prevention Center opened in a dilapidated, abandoned tuberculosis ward on the grounds of Los Angeles County Hospital.

As chief psychiatrist, Litman was seen as an inspired team leader. He guided the development of suicide prevention services that became the prototype for such centers in the U.S. and abroad.

In Los Angeles, the center set up the nation's first 24-hour suicide crisis hotline and in 1964 became the first to train nonprofessional volunteers to answer phones.

The researchers developed the idea of "the suicidal crisis" -- that most suicidal people are acutely so for a relatively short time -- and devised a way to evaluate who was at highest risk of suicide.

Three decades after the center was founded, the suicide rate in Los Angeles had been halved, Litman told the New York Times last year.

Working with the coroner's office, Litman led an early-1960s team that developed the "psychological autopsy," which used interviews with survivors to help determine whether a death was caused by suicide or accident. Its most famous case was Marilyn Monroe, whose 1962 death was ruled "probable suicide."

Litman's "case of the week" seminars at the center were renowned for their spirited discourse and the big names from across the country who came to participate.

The idea for a suicide prevention center came from two Veterans Administration psychologists, Edwin S. Shneidman and Norman L. Farberow, who convinced Litman, over drinks in Beverly Hills, to help establish it.

Then director of the psychiatric unit at what is now Cedars-Sinai Medical Center, Litman had written a paper on how to deal with suicide on a hospital ward.

His interest in the subject was sparked by the death of his high school best friend, Thomas Heggen, who wrote the book and play "Mister Roberts" and whose 1949 death was ruled a probable suicide.”

Didi Hirsch's Suicide Prevention Center 24-hour Crisis Line phone number is 877-7-CRISIS (877-727-4747). It serves the Los Angeles and Orange County areas. There are now 140 certified national suicide prevention crises centers. When one calls the national crisis hotline number 1-800-SUICIDE (1-800-784-2433) the call is transfers to the closest local crises center so that the person at risk can talk to one of the trained local intervention counselors.

The Didi Hirsch Suicide Prevention Center is widely recognized as having developed the telephone crisis intervention model used by most crisis centers and hotlines across the nation and in the world. Today the Suicide Prevention Center's Crisis Line operates with a staff of more than 120 trained volunteers, serving callers throughout Southern California, and has been a part of Didi Hirsch Mental Health Services since 1997.

Among the center's volunteers are students from Pepperdine. Malibu Rotarian Margo Neal said that when she was in her nursing program at UCLA she worked at Didi Hirsch Mental Health Center and was there for 5 years after graduation in the 1970's.

Besides the 24 hour, confidential, free suicide counseling offered to the at risk callers, the Suicide Prevention Center offers several other services, including support groups to those who have attempted suicide, immediate crisis counseling at the scene of a suicide, bereavement program for families of suicide to cope with loss due to suicide, and educational programs to the community.

SUICIDE STATICS FROM 2007

Shari showed us the suicide statistics from the most recent year available-2007. She said in the United States 8.1 million people a year considers suicide, and 1.1 million people attempt it. Of those 34,000 actually end their life. Another appalling statistic is that although the suicide rate generally increases with age, in recent years we have an increased youth rate, with suicide becoming the third leading cause of death young people aged 15-24 years of age. Some of the stats are below:

- **34,000+ Suicides per Year**
- **11th Cause of death in U.S.**
- **2 Each day in L.A.**
- **Rate increases with age**
- **Increased middle age rate**
17.7 per 100,000
- **Over 1,100 college students die by suicide each year**

Second leading cause of death

- **Increased youth rate (15-24 yrs)**

Third leading cause of death

With the extent of the problem so grave, the question is what can we do to stop it? Shari told us about several community outreach training programs offered by the Didi Hirsch Suicide Prevention Center to help train people to be on alert for those around them who are in crisis. The training programs can be for a business or organization. The benefits of Suicide Prevention Training Programs for an organization are to create a safer environment for staff, support staff who may be at risk for suicide or lost someone to suicide. Besides these the increased communication skills can translate to other uses, and promote an emotionally supportive work culture, thereby increasing productivity. Added benefit are less lost work, and teaching skills that may be used beyond work environment.

The Living Works Training Programs are internationally recognized suicide prevention programs that began in 1983. There are multiple evidence based programs to train everyone who wants to help. The goal is to create a suicide-safer community. SPC trains over 60,000 annually, One million people have been trained since the program started.

ASSIST Training Program

This is a special 2 day training program to prevent immediate risk of suicide. It is often given to specific groups of people like police, and who might be likely to come in contact with those at risk for suicide. It teaches how to recognize invitations for help, reach out and offer support, review the risk of suicide, apply a suicide intervention model and link people with community resources. This program costs \$295 but groups may qualify for discount.

Safe TALK Program

Prepares participants to use **TALK: Tell Ask Listen KeepSafe** in a special streamlined 3 hour training to recognize persons with thoughts of suicide. Identify & engage people with thoughts of suicide and then connect people with thoughts of suicide with further help. This course costs \$25.

For more information contact Didi Hirsch Mental Health Services by calling 310-895-2304 or see the website at www.didihirsch.org

Other News and Guests from Last Malibu Club Meeting

Moving Location of Malibu Rotary Club meetings

Malibu Rotary Club President Chris Bauman had maps of the Villa Grazadio Executive Center of Pepperdine University building on the top of the campus, which will welcome the Malibu Rotary Club for weekly meetings, and which has audio-visual equipment which we can use, as opposed to the current Malibu Rotary Club meeting location in the Fireside Room, where Pepperdine seems to be disdainful of us—charging fees to move tables and not giving us access to the A-V equipment in the room.. If we can find a place to store the Rotary gear at Grazadio I say let's do it. I vote for room EC116—It has out side door and window to ocean view. Inside door to kitchen, close to bathroom, and if the charge for breakfast same at Fireside Room what's there not to like?

Chris B and Kevin Boling will be going to a special district meeting for small clubs. Chris announced money being collected for bicycles for students of Dominican Republic and also wheel chair for local needy person. Chris asked for head count for House of Rotary Foundation Dinner November 7, at 2:00 pm at the House of Blues, 8430 Sunset Blvd in Hollywood. \$75.00 per person.



Project TRIUMPH (Today's Revolution Is Understanding; Make Peace Happen) is a grassroots effort to bring Arab and Jewish teenagers together in the spirit of collaboration to build a shared vision for a peaceful future. The program was conceived by Ilan Magdali of the Newbury Park Rotary Club. It brought 10 teenage Arab and 10 teenage Jewish students from Israel to a leadership camp in Simi Valley where they all learned to work together, develop leaders skills before returning to Israel to use what they learned back home. Most of us feel helpless in trying to find a solution to the constant war in the Middle East, but at least this program is trying to do something. Initially sponsorship of this program had been mostly from the Newbury Park Rotary Club and Rotary Clubs in District 5240 and private and corporate donors. Malibu Rotary Club was the first Rotary Club in Rotary District 5280 to support the project.



Pictured above are the students who were hosted in 2008 as they visited Malibu on their way to the leadership camp. Today the program no longer is bringing the students to the US. There is a partnership with the Rotary Club of Haifa and one in Italy to get Jewish and Arab students out of Israel to a place where they can learn to work together and apply this when they return to Israel. A new Pilot TRIUMPH

project is being developed. It concentrates it's efforts on the students in the City of Acre in Israel as a year long program with Jewish and Arab students working together making a video documentary that strives for lifelong results. The new Pilot TRIUMPH project is a non-profit organization with Leon Berg, as its CEO.

If you would like to help with Project TRIUMPH you can contact Shoshana Brower at shobrower@gmail.com or Leon Berg at Leon.Berg@gmail.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 would become \$750.00.

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.

Calendar

October 20th, 2 candidates for Masters in Pepperdine's School of Public Policy Kathleen McAfee & Edwin Afriyie Return to talk about their experience working with the Rwanda government **at Malibu Rotary Club Meeting at 7:30 a.m in the Pepperdine University Fireside Room.**

Nov 7, 2:00 p.m. Rotary Foundation Celebration and Fund-raiser “House of Rotary” Mardi Gras Event held November 7, at 2:00 pm at the House of Blues, 8430 Sunset Blvd in Hollywood. \$75.00 per person

Nov. 17 , (Thursday 6:00 p.m.) Malibu Rotarians in conjunctions with SOS Sponsor, prepare, serve Thanksgiving Dinner for homeless at Webster School.

January 11th (Tuesday, evening) The Malibu Rotary Middle and High School Singing Competition will be held the evening of Tuesday, as a yet to be determined location.

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Future Speakers at Malibu Rotary Club Meetings:

- Oct 20 2010
- **Kathleen McAfee & Edwin Afriyie**
"Our Rwanda Experience"
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- 2 candidates for Masters in Pepperdine's School of Public Policy report on their experience working with the Rwanda government
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- Oct 27 2010
- **Bob Brager**
"City of Malibu Public Works Dept."
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- Nov 3 2010
- **Jason VanaderPal**
"Improving Your Public Speaking"
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- Nov 10 2010
- **Gary Darakjian**
"SOS"
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- Nov 17 2010
- **Jean-Marie Bontous**
"The Social Media"
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- Dec 8 2010
- **Otis Bradley**
"Building "Green""

Please see Malibu Rotary Club Website www.maliburotary.org for latest Calendar and future speakers