



I Did It!



Barbara Bry holds a copy of her book "I Did It."

And we thought David "Jerry" Dominelli was never to be surpassed as the biggest con artist in San Diego history!

The Story of the Largest Woman-Run Ponzi Scheme in American History was presented by Barbara Bry at our December 6th meeting, Barbara is businesswoman and politician and served as a member of the San Diego City Council from 2016 to 2020. She was a candidate for mayor of San Diego in the 2020 election

"I Did It." It's the story of Gina Champion Cain who ran the largest woman-run ponzi scheme in American history. Barbara and her husband Neil Senturia befriended Gina Champion Caine and wrote the book after 40 hours of interviews. Gina Champion-Cain grew up in Michigan and graduated a Wolverine from the University of

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Thousand Smiles Foundation



On December 13th, Bob Chalfa presented a program on Thousand Smiles. Bob and his wife Gloria have been active in the program since it started in 1985.

Bob Chalfa was the perfect person to present a program on the Thousand Smiles Foundation because he was there at the start of the charity in 1985. He is the face of Thousand Smiles and takes every opportunity to promote the medical clinic including Rotary International Conventions, District Conferences, club programs and many other events. Thousand Smiles is composed of doctors, dentists, orthodontists, speech therapists, audiologists, health educators, nurses, and regular volunteers who work to provide dental care, orthodontia, as well as surgical repair of cleft lips/cleft palates for children in Mexico who might otherwise receive no care. They are licensed, credentialed professionals from Mexico and the

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The Fish Song!



Tom Basham served as club host on December 13th and sang the infamous "Fish Song" as he strummed his ukulele. The song starts with the lyrics "I Lobster But Never Flounder..."



Children waiting their turn for surgery at the clinic in Ensenada.



(L-R) Rotarian Kim Muslusky and Gloria and Bob Chalfa staff an information table at a Rotary event in Los Angeles.

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Michigan. She came to California and graduated with an MBA. from the University of San Diego. She worked in the commercial real estate industry and was determined to have her own business empire. One of her first efforts was a restaurant apartment combination called The Patio on Lamont. She started her infamous Ponzi scheme in 2013 as she was desperate to raise \$600,000 to finish work on her money-losing Pacific Beach project. The scheme involved lending money to businesses wanting California liquor licenses. The phantom short term loans would generate large profits and investors were promised big returns. Over 400 million dollars would be eventually be raised but in eight years, not one liquor license was ever sold.

Gina used her charm and charisma to convince many to invest in the scheme, including many friends, business associates and even financial institutions. Money was kept in an escrow account at the prestigious Chicago Title Company and this gave her scheme instant credibility. Gina used the funds raised to expand and prop up her impressive business empire. She owned a group of restaurants, luxury beach area rental properties, retail stores, a string of coffee shops and many apartments. She also bought and developed property. Gina became a local celebrity and was admired as a true visionary. The reality was that almost all of her businesses were losing money.

The Ponzi scheme fell apart under scrutiny and Gina was sentenced to 15 years in prison at the "white collar crime" low security facility in Dublin near Oakland on fraud and conspiracy charges. In a lucky break for investors, an embarrassed Chicago Title is stepping up to reimburse much of the money lost.

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US and are affiliated with Loma Linda University and UCLA. They provide continuity of care and see patients as infants and continue to provide proper care as the patient grows until the defects are repaired. Thousand Smiles has been providing services since 1985 and have treated over 1000 patients needing cleft lip repair and many more who received dental care.

Old Mission Rotary stepped up to become the major club sponsor of Thousand Smiles in 2014 when our club foundation began issuing grants and club members began to volunteer. Over the years, our annual Got Talent fund raiser provides one third of the Thousand Smiles operating budget!

Members of Old Mission Rotary who have been active and long term participants in Thousand Smiles include Hugh Kramer, Bob Chalfa, Mark McAnelly, Catherine Willey, Stan Vogelsang, Cynthia Drake and Lydia Stewart. Many other club members have visited the clinics to observe and help out over the years. Clinics take place quarterly and over a typical Friday and Saturday as many as 150 children receive dental services and as many as ten have surgeries in the new on site surgical suites.



A beautiful little girl after several surgeries and follow on treatment.

Club Host December 6th Michelle Malin



Michelle Malin was our club host on December 6th. She paid tribute to her Italian Grandmother Lucia (Lucy) who lived with her family for 25 years both in Massachusetts and Los Angeles.

Lucy's cooking and baking were always amazing but Michelle remembers her anise cookies with sprinkles as extra special!

*There are two kinds of light --
the glow that illuminates, and
the glare that obscures.*

*-James Thurber, writer and
cartoonist*

Rotary Calendar

- Tuesday, December 27th- **CLUB DARK** for Christmas, Hanukkah and Kwanzaa Holidays.
- Tuesday, January 3rd- **CLUB DARK** for New Years Holiday.
- Monday, January 9th- **Talent Show Planning Meeting** at the Clairemont Boy's & Girls Club at 5:30pm.
- Tuesday, January 10th- **OMR Board of Directors Meeting** after the regular club meeting..
- Friday-Saturday on February 3rd and 4th- **Thousand Smiles Clinic** Ensenada Baja.