

Make a dream come true!

Rotary
District 5280



ROTARY:
MAKING A
DIFFERENCE

FEBRUARY 2018



*Left: You had to be at the District Breakfast in January to know why DG Cozette Vergari and District Breakfast Chair Wilson Benitez are wearing space suits.
Right: We are not quite sure why Jaime Sul Baker is in an evening gown and PDG David Moyers is in pajamas. That's what happens when you miss the District Breakfast.*

Rotary
District 5280



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Make a Dream Come True!



“Let’s celebrate and collaborate to truly make a difference.”

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DISTRICT CALENDAR

February

- 3 PLRS (Potential Rotary Leadership Skills) training in the South Bay
- 9–11 PETS
- 10 Pageant of the Arts Club Apps Due
- 17 PLRS (Potential Rotary Leadership Skills) training in the San Fernando Valley

March

- 3 Membership Forum in the South Bay
- 10 Pageant of the Arts (See [page 7](#))
- 17 Color Run for Polio (See [page 21](#))
- 18 L.A. Marathon, with Team Rotary running to help end polio forever (See [page 4](#) and [page 15](#))
- 21–30 District Humanitarian Trips

April

- 14 Rotary Ethics Forum
- 21 Rotary Day of Service
- 27–29 RYLA

Runs for fun, fitness, fellowship, and to help eradicate polio. See [page 4](#), [page 15](#), and [page 21](#) for information.



“Thank you for making a difference
in people’s lives.”



GREETINGS DISTRICT 5280 ROTARIANS, FAMILY, AND FRIENDS

By Cozette Vergari, District Governor

**PEOPLE OFTEN ASK ME, HOW I MANAGE THE
BUSY SCHEDULE OF A DISTRICT GOVERNOR.
MY ANSWER TO THAT QUESTION IS “WITH A
GREAT DEAL OF PRIDE IN WHAT THE ROTARIANS
OF DISTRICT 5280 ARE ACCOMPLISHING IN
WORKING TOGETHER TO MAKE A DIFFERENCE!!”**

DISASTER RELIEF

From devastation comes inspiration. We continue to channel the generosity of Rotarians into the areas of need. In response to the fires in Ventura and Santa Barbara Counties, there is a collaborative effort happening between the Southern California Rotary Districts to provide assistance to victims.

Clubs and individuals within our district have once again stepped up, as we have been doing the last several months in this unprecedented environment of disaster after disaster. We will keep you posted, as we are discussing among surrounding districts a possible day of planting trees and vegetation, where so much has been lost.

Southern California
Rotary Districts are
collaborating to assist
victims of recent fires
in Ventura and Santa
Barbara counties.

—continues





**RUN FOR FUN, FITNESS,
FELLOWSHIP, AND TO HELP
ERADICATE POLIO**

Saturday, March 17: 5k St. Patrick's Day Color Run. *(See page 21.)*

Sunday, March 18: A Rotary team, sponsored by the Rotary Club of Los Angeles Foundation, is forming for the LA Marathon. Openings available.

Proceeds from both events will go to the End Polio Now Campaign and will be matched 2 to 1 by the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation.

—continues

**JOIN IN THE FUN!
TWO UPCOMING RACES TO HELP END POLIO!**

We push our efforts toward the eradication of polio worldwide. After the tremendous support of Rob's Run To End Polio, where with all the available matching funds we raised \$600,000. YOU now can participate in a weekend of running to eradicate polio. On March 17 and 18 we have two fantastic opportunities for fun, fitness, and fellowship. On Saturday join in all the fun and activities at the 5k St. Patrick's Day Color Run at Griffith Park. On Sunday a team of 15 is forming for the LA Marathon. The Rotary Club of Los Angeles Foundation is sponsoring the team, so entry fees are covered. As I write this, there are still eight openings available. Proceeds raised from both events will be donated to the End Polio Now Campaign and will be matched 2 to 1 by the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation.

**RI DISTRICT 5280
HUMAN TRAFFICKING INITIATIVE**

Our efforts are ongoing, as we work with Homeland Security, the courts, elected officials, local law enforcement agencies, and several non-profits in our region in the battle against the commercial sexual exploitation of children and, in the larger picture, human trafficking in the Los Angeles region. Yes, slavery is alive and well in our communities, while predators are making millions of dollars. Our own children and grandchildren are at risk and can be targets so easily through the Internet. Vulnerable children, who for one reason or another are living

on the streets or in foster care, are routinely exploited right in our own backyards. On June 3 the Woodland Hills and Calabasas clubs are hosting an event to help in the fight against this terrible brutality. One third of all proceeds raised will be directed toward the District 5280 Charitable Foundation, restricted for the battle against human trafficking.

**UPCOMING EVENTS
REQUIRING REGISTRATION**

- **PRLS:** February 3 or 17
- **Membership Forum:** March 3
- **Pageant of the Arts:** March 10
- **5k St. Patrick's Day Color Run For Polio Eradication:** March 17 *(See page 21)*
- **LA Marathon Rotarians and Teammates Running For Polio Eradication:** March 18
- **District Humanitarian Trips to Colombia:** March 21–26 and/or 26–30

Again, thanking you for making a difference in peoples lives.

PS: Please direct any questions to Tori Hettinger, District Office administrator, at 310.670.9792 or Tori.Hettinger@Rotary5280.org. ★





BE THE INSPIRATION

By Michael Turner (Woodland Hills), SAG Communications

ROTARY INTERNATIONAL PRESIDENT-ELECT BARRY RASSIN laid out his vision for the future of the organization at Rotary's International Assembly in San Diego. He called on leaders to work for a sustainable future and to inspire Rotarians and the community at large. He then unveiled to the incoming DGs the 2018–19 presidential theme, Be the Inspiration.

Rassin, a member of the Rotary Club of East Nassau, New Providence, Bahamas, said, "I want you to inspire in your clubs, your Rotarians, that desire for something greater. The drive to do more, to be more, to reach their own potential. It's your job to motivate them — and help them find their own way forward."

The Merriam-Webster dictionary defines inspiration as " . . . something that makes someone want to do something or that gives someone an idea about what to do or create, a force or influence that inspires someone."

We hear this word a lot. "Who or what inspired you?" When I think of being inspired, I may lean toward people who have influenced me. I also have found inspiration in many different and even unorthodox places, particularly the bathroom. Over time, I have been inspired by many things—the beach, the woods, a concert, dining out, a hummingbird fluttering around a bush, on a cruise, or even a Starbucks.

DONALD WYLIE was one of my professors at San Diego State University. He inspired me. I was approaching my last semester and realized —continues



*"I want you to inspire in your clubs,
your Rotarians, that desire
for something greater.*

*The drive to do more, to be more,
to reach their own potential."*

—RI President-elect Barry Rassin



—continues

that I was one credit short of graduating. I asked Dr. Wylie, "What would you recommend?" He looked at me with a wide grin, akin to seeing the heavens opening up and the angels descending with trumpets blaring. He said, "I've been assigned an additional section of Introduction to Broadcasting, but I have too much on my plate. Would you assist me in teaching the course?"

Every experience
may open
the doors to
wonderful
opportunities.

I pondered the questions and said, "I have never taught and I'm not sure if teaching is something that I want to do." Dr. Wylie, said, "Well, this class will allow you to see if you like teaching! And, you'll receive the one credit you need for graduation." As it turned out, I was not the assistant, but the teacher. Dr. Wylie was too busy with other things and he rarely came to "his" class.

Dr. Wylie's nudge opened the door to teaching. Right after graduation, I taught a summer course at San Diego State. Over the years, I have taught at the University of Nebraska at Omaha; University of North Dakota; University of the Pacific; and California State University, Northridge. And, for the past 16 years I've been teaching at University of Phoenix, online and in the traditional classroom.

Without Dr. Wylie's inspiration, I may not have been a teacher. We need to realize that every experience may open the doors to wonderful opportunities. When I am inspired, I have learned to never flinch and to move forward to explore the possibilities.

STEVE JOBS SAID, "You can't connect the dots looking forward; you can only connect them looking backwards. So you have to trust that the dots will somehow connect in your future. You have to trust in something – your gut, destiny, life, karma, whatever. This approach has never let me down, and it has made all the difference in my life."

Who has inspired you? Who have you inspired?

[Here is a link](#) to Rotary International President-elect Barry Rassin's speech at the International Assembly. ★



Save The Date

SATURDAY APRIL 14, 2018

ROTARY COMMUNITY PEACE CONFERENCE APRIL 2018

WAGING PEACE: PERSPECTIVES FOR ACTION

What can we do in today's conflicted world to make a meaningful impact on progress towards peace? Join us to learn from today's children, who are our future peacemakers, and yesterday's survivors in an inspiring program.



Program includes:

- Glendale Unified School District English-Japanese Immersion Program students will present their peace projects exploring the cost of war and the hope for peace
- Winner of peace speech contest for high school students (First prize: a trip to Hiroshima)
- Survivors of the Hiroshima Atomic Bomb ("Hibakusha")
- Japanese Americans who were interned in the U.S. during World War II
- Notable world leaders in promoting peace including Rotary Peace Fellows
- Origami paper crane making workshop to fold 3,000 cranes for peace organizations in U.S. and Japan
- Hiroshima tree that survived the A-bomb: seedling gift presentation

This event is part of a year-long Peace Educational Project through a Rotary Global Grant, hosted by the Rotary Club of Little Tokyo.

When: Saturday, April 14, 2018

Time: 10:00 AM – 2:00 PM

Place: Japanese American Cultural & Community Center, Aratani Theatre
244 S. San Pedro Street, Los Angeles 90012

Contact: Makiko Nakasone
Email: LittleTokyoRotaryClub@gmail.com

(Related information: See article on [page 9.](#))





Rotarian Teresa LeGrove, third from right, reads winner's names at Malibu's High School Singing Contest



RECOGNIZING TEEN TALENT IN THE ARTS

By Lorine Parks (Downey), Senior Correspondent

DOES THE NEXT BEYONCÉ LIVE IN YOUR CLUB'S COMMUNITY? IS A WORLD-CLASS ARTIST GETTING READY TO CHANGE THE WORLD? IS A MISTY COPELAND PUTTING ON HER TOE SHOES, OR AN INCIPIENT OPERA STAR PRACTICING HER HIGH C'S? IS THERE A YOUNG CHURCHILL WHO IS PUTTING HEART AND SOUL INTO COMPOSING A RAP OR HIP-HOP PROTEST SONG, TO RALLY THE TROOPS? ORATORY STARTS LOCALLY.

SPEECH, MUSIC, ART AND DANCE are the categories. Dancers, sculptors, photographers, painters, public speakers, musicians and singers, and are possible entrants. "They're all welcome at the annual District-level Pageant of the Arts," said Lance Miller (LA5), chairing of the event.

Rotary clubs are holding local contests, giving opportunities for high school and middle school students to showcase their talents. The winners will compete for District honors on March 10 at Loyola-Marymount University. "I know that the greatest wasted natural resource in the world," commented

Lance, "is the untapped potential that resides in each of us. I love helping people tap their potential and understand the power of their integrity."

SOME CLUBS ARE CHOOSING to focus on just one art form, as does Malibu, and they —continues



—continues
host a concert of songsters at a packed Pepperdine University auditorium and with professional judges from the world of music. The Downey club sets up a sparkling easel display of art from local high schools and members rate them at a club meeting.

"I come from a speaking background," Lance commented, "and I am a World Champion Speaker with Toastmasters. I have delivered over 5,000 presentations in more than 50 countries. But please do not ask me to sing, dance, or draw! Each skill set is a unique art form that needs to be encouraged and developed in our youth."

ROTARY'S PAGEANT OF THE ARTS provides high school students the opportunity to display their talents and compete with other students for monetary prizes: 1st place \$1000, 2nd place \$500, 3rd place \$250, in each category. But it isn't just the money, Lance stressed. "While some have received scholarship opportunities based on their work, the contestants gain recognition and valuable experience as well as exposure to university deans and professors. That's the [golden] coin that young artists need."

And for Rotary clubs, it's an exceptional opportunity to connect with the community. Entrants also can be found at performing arts studios, YMCA or YWCA, theater groups, community centers, and retail centers.

WHY DOES ROTARY THINK IT IS IMPORTANT to encourage the arts among young people? Besides supporting student creativity, it gives them an opportunity to receive significant recognition for their



Toastmaster Extraordinaire Lance Miller (LA5) is chair of the March 10 Pageant of the Arts competition

talent. Some past winners have won scholarships to Julliard because they were discovered at the Pageant.

"And there's more," commented Lance. "This activity promotes the Rotary theme and Four Way Test and encourages students to reach out and create a better world. Contestants choose a challenge within their community, school, state, nation, or family, and then apply the Four-Way Test to it."

"Each year we have over 100 student winners," said Lance, "participating in this championship meet, and over 100 Rotarians attend in support of their clubs and the students they sponsor. Assisting Lance with the preparations and presentations are Speech Chair Agnes Lewis, Dance Chair Gwen Vuchsas, and Music Chair Debbie Wehbe.

HOW ARE THE JUDGES CHOSEN? "The judges are normally professors from local universities like

LMU," commented Lance, "and Pepperdine, Cal State LA, and OTIS College of Design. They are normally not Rotarians. Occasionally, we will have a music or dance industry expert who agrees to help. It is on a voluntary basis."

LANCE BECAME INTERESTED in Rotary because, "I wanted feel a part of Los Angeles. LA is a big city and it is quite easy to be a disconnected spectator living here. Rotary gave me an opportunity to meet and work with people from across the many communities that make up our city and be part of an action that works to improve our village."

"What motivates me," commented Lance, "is that I believe we are as valuable as we serve others. I have been active in Toastmasters for over 25 years and have managed and competed scores of such contests. I know how to organize and run them. It's an area of expertise I have, where I can provide a significant contribution to the District and contestants."

"I try to simplify life's challenges into bite-size solutions that are easy to use," Lance remarked, "and all it takes for problems to go unsolved is for good people to do nothing. I didn't want to be part of the problem, I wanted to be part of the solution. Rotary is a big part of the solution."

APPLICATIONS AND ENTRY FEES for the District contest are paid by clubs: small (24 members or less) \$80; medium (25–49 members) \$135; large (50+ members) \$190. February 10 is the deadline for submissions. No exceptions! [For more information.](#) ★





GLENDALE SCHOOL STUDENTS ARE LEARNING ABOUT THE IMPORTANCE OF PEACE

By Makiko Nakasone, AG, Little Tokyo



THE LITTLE TOKYO CLUB hosted inspirational school assemblies at Verdugo Woodlands Elementary School, Woodrow Wilson Middle School, and Dunsmore Elementary School in Glendale. Guest speakers were Hiroshima A-bomb survivor and WWII Japanese American internees.

This is part of the Rotary Global Grant Peace Educational Project to help students learn the importance of peace through history and how to take action toward peace building.

ROTARY GLOBAL GRANT SCHOLAR Hanako Iwamura joined Makiko Nakasone of Little Tokyo and Jewel Price of Glendale Sunrise on January 16 to host three school assemblies for more than 650 students. It was amazing to see even the elementary school students listen intently and ask great questions to Hiroshima survivor Kikuko Otake and Japanese American internee Bill Shishima. After their stories, the students asked, "Why were the Japanese Americans put in those camps?" "What did you think about when you were in the camp?" "Did you know Sadako?" We also donated Survivor Ginkgo seedlings from Hiroshima to the three participating schools.

The students are working on group projects on peace by reading more than 300 subject-related books donated by the club to help establish a "Rotary Peace Library" in their school libraries and by interviewing their grandparents, who may have gone through the war or other hardships. In addition, other students

are taking care of the Survivor Ginkgo seedlings by watering them, drawing pictures of their growth, and discussing what they can do to nurture peace.

As a finale of this year-long Peace Educational Project, the District will be holding the first Rotary Community Peace Conference on Saturday, April 14, at the Japanese American Cultural & Community Center. Among the guest speakers are Rotary Peace Fellow Captain D.F. Pace of the Philadelphia Police Department and Steven Leeper, who is the first American chairperson of the Hiroshima Peace Cultural Foundation.

THE CLUB IS EXCITED that some of the District's Rotaractors are actively supporting the conference by overseeing the promotion of the event, especially on social media. The club thanks Irene Bourdon of the Adventist Health Foundation and Javier Cano of JW Marriott for sponsoring this Peace Conference and KNBC's Fritz Coleman who was the emcee. ★

(Related information: See Rotary Community Peace Conference flyer on [page 6.](#))





Part I

GOATS EMPOWER IMPOVERISHED WOMEN IN NEPAL

By Lorine Parks (Downey)
Senior Correspondent

**MOST OF THE WORLD
CONSIDERS NEPAL** a spiritual
pinnacles of the world. However, wars
of all sorts have reigned for decades
impacting economic development.

"My introduction to Nepal," said
Rotarian Rosalind Russell, "was in
1988. I was 43-year-old, by myself on
a worldwide personal trip to spiritual
places. Nepal was one such stop.
In Durbar Square in Kathmandu a



Rotarian Rosalind Russell and her "adopted" son, Rabin, 15 years after their first meeting in 1988.

happenstance meeting with an 11-year-
old boy inspired a divine meeting.

"I refer to Rabindra as my 'adopted'
son, but actually the reverse is true.
He adopted me and I have the proud
papers to show it. I suggested he call
me "Auntie," but Rabin and his family

insisted I was 'Maaytae,' 'Mom,' or
second mother.

"When adopted in Nepal the entire
family adopts you, so with Rabin
I filled my entire heart with three
more children and their spouses, four
grandchildren, countless brothers

and sisters. To think, I had made a
conscious decision not to be a mom,
but that was my plan . . . not the
Universe's plan for me."

**SINCE THAT CHANCE
ENCOUNTER IN 1988**, on her own
initiative and admitting —continues



—continues

she knew nothing about what lay ahead. Rosalind has personally

Rosalind brought goats, founded a school, and established a loan program

delivered thousands of female goats to women in Nepali villages. When she witnessed women making coal-smudged thumbprints, she realized

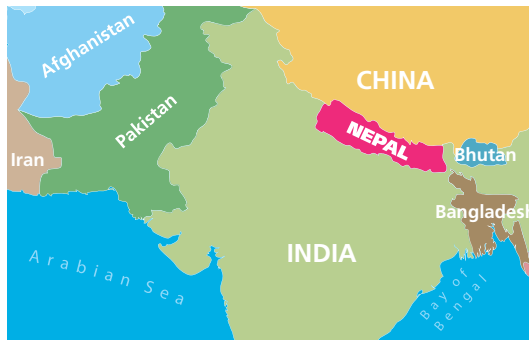
they could neither read nor write, so Rosalind founded the now-thriving Top of the World K-5 School. The school jump started women's economic development and established a loan program, so they would have the needed funds to start their own businesses.

Women now use foot-powered sewing machines to make garments and pre-fab canvas greenhouses, which are used for year-round organic farming. These and other projects have brought in cash to not only repay the business loans but have improved nutrition, access to clean water, education, and healthcare, especially for women and children. In addition, the projects conform to Rotary's Areas of Focus.

—continues



Women in the village of Wojetal, hold records of loans made and paid. Rosalind (center in a blue blouse) watches them.



After a succession of monarchs, the landlocked Himalayan country underwent a violent struggle for democracy in the 20th century, and a Maoist terrorist revolution broke out, which led to armed conflict. A country of astonishing beauty, Nepal remains one of the poorest countries in the world, with high maternal and child mortality, acute malnutrition, and juvenile sex trafficking.



—continues

"We started many projects thanks to Rotary clubs, such as Laguna Beach and Patan South in Nepal," said Rosalind. "The members welcome me wonderfully and I enjoy all of them, along with their suggestions and guidance. They are always eager to support my R Star Foundation, because they know we act with integrity. Rabindra is also a member of the Patan South Club. He also attends the Dhulikhel Club and has served in different board positions."

ROSALIND IS PRESIDENT-ELECT

2018–19 of the E-Club of the West. She is an ordained minister committed to world peace and heads the [R Star Foundation](#). Her exceptional story comes directly from her book, *Reach to Peace*, used here with permission of the publisher. This is the story of one person making a difference, but a difference of such world magnitude that it does seem divinely inspired. To tell the narrative, here is Rosalind, in her words:

In 2003, fifteen years after this momentous beginning, I decided to return, not as a tourist but with a purpose, because I had a promise to keep. I went in spite of a U.S. State Department Tourist Travel Advisory



This woman's husband, Som, is Rosalind's leading goat-gatherer.

declaring Nepal an unsafe country.

I pondered and decided that an appropriate gift for Rabin and his family would be two pregnant female goats. Why goats? To empower women and children to help impoverished women who would, in turn, help their village and other villages. Goats can provide milk, cheese, and wool and give birth to more goats. Part of the contract is that they will not eat the original gift goats within the first year.

Friends in Laguna Beach sent checks for more goats, and the plan changed

from six goats to 50. By now Rabin was 23, and could help make the plan possible, gifting two breeder goats to each woman in a group of 25, with one breeder goat per group and with micro-financing seed money for the women to start businesses with the small loans.

The groups would keep the interest earned, capped the interest rate at 15%, now down to 10%. That was in a country where the financial climate is such that unsecured loans charged as much as 185%. The interest goes back to build the borrowable funds. One more condition: I agreed with the donors that I would pet each beautiful goat personally.

Twenty-nine hours after taking off from LAX, I was exhausted when Rabin and his family greeted me at the Kathmandu Airport in late December

"It hurt my heart to know of such extreme poverty for any human."

2003, on a typical cold gray winter afternoon. Rabin's dad, Ram, worked at the airport and could guide me through the extreme chaos of retrieving luggage. After unpacking in my modest hotel room, and in the darkness of evening, Rabin and I headed down a dirt

road for a short walk to his family home for dinner. We used a small flashlight to help maneuver around the potholes in the road.

The poverty in Nepal gagged me, as it did on my first trip long ago, as we walked quickly on the uneven, unlighted, dark streets in the winter cold. It hurt my heart to know of such extreme poverty for any human. The dark didn't cover it at all.

The next morning Rabin and I set off on his old India-built motorcycle we named "The Iron Horse." Picture me, now a 58-year-old, bouncing over the miserable roads. I felt rather spry, dressed in cargo pants and several jackets to protect me from the cold. I did not look anything like how a Nepalese woman would dress, but still I was treated cordially by the men in charge.

We had funds for 89 goats and we included the vaccinations, de-worming, veterinarian exams, tags, books for recording goats and women, and hiring "goat gatherers," who would comb the hills and countryside for fine goats to present. We included micro-financing in each group of women of mixed castes (Nepal is a country where the state religion is Hinduism).

Our funding also included —continues



red ribbons we placed on each goat to set them apart from the others in the village, as an added blessing, if you will. Part of the agreement was that the women had

Goats were for milk, cheese, and their fine hair, which can be woven like wool.

promised not to allow the goats to be eaten. They were for milk, cheese, and their fine hair, which could be woven like wool.

Sadly, the plan to place goats didn't

fly with the charity agency I selected. For example we were told it would take a year to get the village prepared. As the many meetings concluded, Rabin gave me a light touch and whispered, "We can do this without them, now, and better."

So we dealt directly with the government Livestock Department and they gave us a lesser charge. There are no goat corrals in Nepal, so we got Som, the goat-collector, to negotiate for each goat. We were given cost-free veterinarians to assist in training the women receiving the animals. That automatically increased what we could give to the villages, so at the time of gifting to the women, we gave out 200 goats! And we did this within three weeks.



Elderly woman showing off her goats.

It was disorganized in the villages, all talking at one time, no one was listening to anyone. Different dialects, different castes meant attitudes had to be carefully maneuvered. Most of the goats were either in season or very pregnant, 30% with twins. The studs were pony-sized to help breeding larger animals.

Eventually we passed out the goats in lottery fashion. Each woman drew from a clear glass a tightly folded handwritten number we had prepared the night before. When the number attached, were announced, the owner of the "lottery" drawn number came forward. She coal-marked her thumbprint in our

ledger, smiling as she was acknowledged before the entire village. With the two goats, she had been given more than she had ever been given in her life. ★

Part II will be featured in the March e-newsletter.



Family memberships may be a strategy to consider if a club hopes to engage family members.

Here are some examples of family memberships:

District 5710 (Kansas)

has a provisional club almost entirely designed around families. A parent is listed as the active Rotarian, but the annual fees cover participation for the entire family. Meetings are held on Sunday afternoons and children are invited to attend them as well as projects and other activities. The club also appoints an unofficial leadership role to one of the children, which rotates between the kids over time. This helps them to build leadership and responsibility skills. Eight families are participating and the number is growing steadily.

[Moorpark, CA Morning Rotary offers family membership](#) for \$100 per month and allows registration of up to three members of a family, which includes breakfast!

[Tucson Rotary's family membership](#) is only for immediate family members and includes access to all club activities and committees. A mentor is assigned to the new family member.

[Lockport, NY Rotary](#) (click on Family Membership Application under "Join Us") created an application that categorizes family designees and requires all representatives go through an eight-step initiation process.



Membership Nook:

ARE YOU WILLING TO CHANGE?

By Kathleen Terry (Manhattan Beach), SAG Membership



IS YOUR CLUB SUFFERING from “we have always done it this way” syndrome? If so, you might want to consider how you can take advantage of the new flexibility options offered to clubs as a result of the 2016 council on Legislation:

- Change your meeting schedule
- Vary your meeting format
- Relax attendance requirements
- Offer multiple membership types

Rotary clubs around the world are experimenting with club flexibility and membership types, but how does a club go about offering an alternative membership? Before making changes, clubs should ask themselves questions like: Why do we want to offer this new membership type? How would our club benefit? What membership issues do we expect it to address?

Check out the *Starting Guide for Alternative Membership Types* document to get started, and find out how you can modify your bylaws to reflect new membership types, such as family memberships featured on the left. (If you know of clubs that have successfully implemented family membership, please [send me an email](#) so we can recognize them and share their stories with others in our District.)

See you at the Second Annual Membership Seminar on March 3, 8:30 a.m. –noon in the South Bay. ★



Rotarians and Rotaractors will be running in the LA Marathon on March 18 to raise money for “End Polio Now.”

ROTARACTORS ARE LOOKING FOR A FEW GOOD RUNNERS

By Sarah Furie (San Fernando Rotaract), Rotaract Correspondent

EXHAUSTION. That is the first word I think of when I hear the word “marathon.” Even preparing to run a 5k sounds exhausting. For District Rotaract Representative Chris Reyes and his friends, exhaustion is not an obstacle. Rotarians and Rotaractors will be running in the LA Marathon on March 18. Our District had a team in the 2016 marathon, and Chris is trying to motivate people to run again this year.

Have you previously run a marathon and want to “give it a go” again? Are you already a long-distance runner and want to push yourself? Chris is encouraging more people to join the five who have already signed up. In 2016 we had 10 brave souls.

The team is raising money for “End Polio Now.” As you may know, one of Rotary’s biggest initiatives is

eradicating polio around the world. As a Rotaractor who grew up in the 1990s, I have seen the shocking effects of polio, from the past and unfortunately, the present. I am so thankful I was given a vaccine as a child and didn’t have to suffer from polio paralysis. A lot of Rotaractors are thankful for that as well. Chris said, “I’m running because I genuinely want to make a difference by raising more money for polio than the first time I ran. The thought of being able to run when others can’t pushes me to do my best.”

The team raised \$8,000 in 2016, so this year the goal is \$10,000. If running is the last thing on your mind, like it is for me, please consider donating to support the team. You can [go to the team’s page](#). ★



Rotaract – Marathon with Chris Reyes (blue shirt)

“I like running because it allows me to reflect and stay healthy. It’s a great way to relieve stress, but also to get your mind focused.”

— Chris Reyes, Rotaractor



Imaginative Club Project

I ACTED OUT OF HATE, AND NOT THE WAY A ROTARIAN SHOULD

By Lorine Parks (Downey,) Senior Correspondent



**A RABBI, A PASTOR AND A SHAYKH
WALK INTO THE ROTARY CLUB. . .**

**IT SOUNDS LIKE A LATE-NIGHT TV SHOW
JOKE, BUT IT HERALDS A PANEL DISCUSSION
ON RELIGIOUS SIMILARITIES AND
DIFFERENCES. THANKS TO THE WOODLAND
HILLS CLUB UNDER THE INSPIRING
LEADERSHIP OF PRESIDENT PAUL GROSS,
THE IMAGINATIVE CREATIVE PROJECT OF
THE MONTH HAS TURNED INTO A THOUGHT-
PROVOKING CONVERSATION TO RELEASE
TENSION AND PROMOTE PEACE.**

**PARADOXICALLY, THIS EVENT GREW OUT OF
AN EPISODE OF ANGER AND BITTERNESS.
WHAT STARTED AS A MOMENT OF BLIND
PREJUDICE HAS BECOME A DAY OF
INCLUSION AND A SEARCH FOR PEACE.**

—continues



Speakers Panel: From the left, Rabbi Paul Kipnes, Dr. Ross Porter, and Shaykh Suhail Hasan Mulla.





Paul Gross

PAUL'S STORY

"It was my idea," said Paul. "The concept came from my own life experiences, and my biases. I was asked at a club meeting to pose for a picture with the rest of the club. The picture was being sent to a local mosque as a sign of friendship. I refused to participate.

"My parents were Holocaust survivors who lost everyone. After the war they moved to Israel, and my Dad fought in a war there as well. They moved to the United States in 1960, where I was born. I was raised not to trust. On 9/11, I lost friends, I couldn't trust Muslims. I believed they all hated Jews.

"I carried the mistrust and resentments with me," Paul goes on. "But after I refused to participate in the picture, it made me think, it made me look back at that behavior, and I was ashamed. I acted out of hate and not the way a Rotarian should act. It was at that point I conceived the idea of a Clergy Panel.

"I felt it was important to stay as local to the Woodland Hills community as possible," Paul commented. "In planning last year's inaugural panel, I turned to Rabbi Paul Kipnes at Congregation Or Ami in Calabasas, where I am a member. He has been an inspiration to me for years. I also knew Dr.

Ross Porter, deacon aspirant, who is affiliated with St. Mel's Church in Woodland Hills. Dr. Porter is a person I admire tremendously, and I felt he would be a tremendous asset to the panel.

"As for as our Islamic representative, I took the suggestion of Ron Supancic, our Peace Committee chair, and reached out to Shaykh Suhail Mullah. The clergy were remarkable! They met each other for the first time at that event and have maintained warm relationships since the first panel."

*"Religion
need not be
an obstacle
to peace, but
a pathway."
—Paul Gross*

and inspirational it was and how we should take this concept to the public. We hope to have 200 attendees at this year's event."

What results does Paul, the man who did a 180-degree turn-around, expect from this event? "An understanding that we are more alike than different," he said. "That religion need not be an obstacle to peace but a pathway. Let's look beyond what makes us different to what makes us similar."

Last year an officer from the Topanga Hate Crimes Division asked him, "What can we do to make a difference?" He said, "This is it, you're doing it!" ★

LAST YEAR'S EVENT

was held at a club meeting, and we opened up with this question: "Can religion solve the problems in our community and in the world?" Many people came up to me after the meeting to say how amazing

THIS YEAR'S CLERGY-PANEL EVENT: CHAOS CONFLICT KUMBAYA

Sunday, March 11, from 11:30 a.m.–2 p.m.

Location: West Valley Warner Center Chamber of Commerce Conference Center, 6100 Topanga Canyon Blvd., Woodland Hills.

Featuring:

- Rabbi Paul J. Kipnes of Congregation Or Ami, (Calabasas);
- Ross Porter, Ph.D., deacon aspirant in the Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Los Angeles (West Hills); and
- Shaykh Suhail Mulla, resident scholar, Islamic Society of West Valley (Canoga Park).

Tickets: General Admission \$25; \$35 at the door. Lunch is included lunch.

Format: An interactive event, with the audience invited to ask questions. Send pre-event comments and suggestions to clergypanel@gmail.com.

Assisting with facilitation and dialogue:

Mediators Beyond Borders (MBB), which supports RI's efforts to design strategies for works of peace.

"We are looking forward to seeing the community, collaborating, and having a dialogue that can lead us to a better world," says Paul, who hopes district Rotarians and the public will also participate.

The club is seeking sponsors. If you are interested, [contact Paul](#). All event proceeds go to the Woodland Hills Rotary Foundation to support the club's project.





CLUB 62

News from District 5280 Clubs



For more than 35 years, the **Westchester Club** has welcomed students from New Zealand who are part of the Rotary Youth Exchange program.

This year, the club welcomed 34 students and two chaperones, who arrived in early January. They spent three days touring Southern California. It was a short break before the students left Los Angeles to spend a year of study in eight European countries and Idaho. (Pictured above flanking Westchester Club President



Judy Delavigne are students Polly Chamberlain, left, who will study in Germany, and Georgie Chalmers, who is on her way to school in Denmark.)

Westchester's Warren Bobrow has coordinated this project since 2003. He was deservedly recognized for his dedication and commitment, receiving his third Paul Harris and a sapphire pin. (Pictured above are Warren, left, with Rotarian Jerry Cowper, from New Zealand.)



Santa Clarita Valley Noon and Sunrise Rotarians stood at the Red Kettle on December 23 and rung the bell for the Salvation Army. More than just "a little change" was collected that day, meaning "big change" for those living in Santa Clarita who are going through difficult times. Rotarians collected a whopping \$6,107.64.

Jerry Bloom, a Rotarian in the Sunrise club and officer in charge of the local Salvation Army Corps and Community Center said, "This was a great day and efforts by Rotarians and will go a long way to help the Salvation Army in Santa Clarita serve more than 5,000 people a year.

—continues



—continues



Rio Hondo-Vernon brought gifts to the children at Valla De Los Palmas International Project in Tecate, Mexico.



Hawthorne-Lennox Rotaract prepared sandwiches for St. Margaret's Center in Lennox. The skilled nursing facility serves infants, children, and young adults with disabilities and medical conditions.

—continues



BURBANK

SUNRISE ROTARY

PRESENTS



DRAG QUEEN BINGO FUNDRAISER



THURSDAY MARCH 1, 2018 AT 7 PM!!

Join us at Hamburger Mary's for a night of fun! Including lots of laughter, fellowship, and an uproarious bingo game! Help us raise money for future service club projects!!

\$20.00

Cost for a bingo packet.
Prizes for each winner and
there will be a live auction!

Hamburger Mary's
8288 Santa Monica BLVD, West
Hollywood, CA, 90046

*Valet parking on side/rear

**Try to get there early as space is
limited



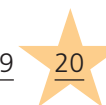
OTHER NEWS

from District 5280



The District's Nominating Selection Committee chose Bette Hall (Calabasas), pictured left, as the District Governor Designate. She will serve as the District Governor for the Rotary Year 2020-21.

Read about Bette's Rotary and professional life in the March issue of the e-newsletter.





win a trip to

DUBLIN

ireland

at the Rotary District 5280
St. Patrick's Day 5k Color Run to End Polio
Saturday, March 17, 10-2 at Griffith Park!

Register before March 1 and save!
Visit our website for details and to register

Everyone who participates in the run will receive a t-shirt, sunglasses, lunch, and a raffle ticket. Raffle prizes thus far are two round-trip tickets to Dublin, Ireland; a \$500 donation to the Rotary Foundation in your name; a 55" flat-screen television; wine baskets; toys; and other fun items. If you can't participate in the run, raffle tickets may be purchased from your club president or by sending an e-mail to 5280picnic@gmail.com.

You don't need to run to enjoy this event. It will be fun-filled day with barbecued hamburgers/ hot dogs prepared by the Rotary Club of South Bay Sunrise; live music by The Ploughboys, a fun and talented Irish band; and fun activities/games for kids.

All proceeds will go to END POLIO NOW and will be matched two-to-one by the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation!

Email Wendy Clifford at or call her at 213.369.6065 for raffle tickets or and information.

** This will be a travel voucher for \$2500 and can be used for any travel.*



The RI float won the Princess Trophy at the Tournament of Roses Parade on New Year's Day. In front of the float are, (l- r) Los Angeles Mayor Eric Garcetti; John Matthews, RI Director of Zones 25 & 26; & Paul Netzel, Chair of RI Foundation.

—continues





The January Presidents' Brunch was held at the Marion Davies Guest House at the Annenberg Community Beach House in Santa Monica. ★

