



District 5320

“Service Above Self”

February 2023



The February through April months each year offer many opportunities for Laguna Beach Rotarians and their spouses, if desired to serve.



Ed Gould

At the very busy January 20th meeting, sign-up sheets were passed for Grapes for Grads sub-committees and prospects for reading to first and second graders, distributing dictionaries to third graders at both El Moro and Top of the World elementary schools. In addition, Community Grants are requested and reviewed, RYLA camp or Interact Club members is launched, scholarships are awarded, etc.

While some of these activities are done by members only, others can involve spouse or partners if you, and they so desire. Reading to first and second graders, distribution of dictionaries, and Grapes for Grads Committees are all activities that your partner or spouse might find enjoyable. So, if so inclined when you see a sign-up sheet for any of those activities consider signing up your spouse or partner, after asking of course. My wife is a retired first and second grade teacher and is looking forward to reading to the children in our elementary schools.

The rest of the Winter and the Spring are great times to engage in Rotary activities and serve our community in ways that are meaningful to those who receive our efforts. And, they are also a chance to involve our spouse or partner in wonderful services to our community. Let’s show our Rotary spirit and commitment to serve by being active in our community!

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Club Programs Director

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BIRTHDAYS

February

- Maggie Klein - 1
- Adrian Lynn - 5
- Andy Turner - 8
- Rod Hatter - 9
- Rene’ Williams - 20



**Outstanding
Achievement**



In addition to being honored as the 2022 Laguna Beach Chamber of Commerce “Ambassador of the Year,” Rotarian Gail Duncan was also honored by a representative from State Senator Dave Min’s office of the 37th Senate District.

Memoirs of a Past President Tory Thomas

My presidency was during the 2008-2009 Rotary calendar year and was by far my favorite year as a Laguna Beach Rotarian. Prior to starting as president, I was able to attend the Rotary International Convention in Los Angeles. Some would think this was unfortunate that the convention was in Los Angeles during my year, but it was really a blessing. I had very young children at the time so, because the convention was only an hour away, this allowed my wife, Maryann, to join me. It also provided me added opportunities and involvement in the actual convention itself. As a local Rotary club, we were asked to host a party for the international and out of state Rotarians who attended the convention. As luck would have it, it was the president-elect who was given this unique opportunity to serve. Therefore, Maryann and I, along with a few other Rotarians, chartered a tour bus and brought about 30 Rotarians from all parts of the world from the Los Angeles Convention Center to Laguna Beach.



One of our Laguna Beach Rotary members donated their beautiful backyard, right on the ocean, for dinner and drinks. On the way back to Los Angeles, as we drove past Disneyland on the 5 freeway, their fireworks show began. As I was hamming it up as the tour guide on the bus microphone, I noticed the fireworks and announced “Here is the Disneyland fireworks show right on cue.” I think some of them actually thought I had somehow coordinated the timing of the fireworks show with the bus route. It was both amazing and hilarious. After the convention was over and everyone returned home, I kept in touch with many of these Rotarians. Some of them even sent me gifts from their country to show their appreciation for the evening we spent together.

Meeting all of these Rotarians from around the world really opened my eyes to the specialness of the Rotary International organization. What really makes Rotary special are the members, not just in Laguna Beach, but around the world.

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A Table of Talent



Early Laguna



Another PHF!



ROTARY PROGRAMS

- 2/13 Fred Salas - Exec. Dir “Live Like Jack Foundation” Organ Transplants
- 2/10 Gem Munro - Amarok Society - Teach mothers to teach the world.
- 2/17 DARK - President’s Day Weekend
- 2/24 Manuel Camargo - Decommissioning San Onofre Nuclear Power Plan

ROTARY DUTIES

	2/3/23	2/10/23	2/17/23	2/24/2023
GREETER 1	Jan Herkelrath	Julie Hile	DARK	Jerry Immel
GREETER 2	Keith Matassa	Katy Moss	DARK	John Nootbaar
BADGES	Noel Johnson	Michael Laux	DARK	Mike Mahoney
CASH	David Norton	Sharon Plumley	DARK	Pam Polzin
TICKETS	Stan Carmichael	Nick Clarke	DARK	Bobbi Cox
INSPIRATION	Wally Shao	Ed Storke	DARK	Wayne Stroscher
BIRTHDAY CAKE			DARK	Maggie Klein

RYLA (Rotary Youth Leadership Award)

From Tory Thomas

My daughter, Emily, was awarded a RYLA scholarship by the Laguna Beach Rotary Club in 2018, when she was a Junior at LBHS. RYLA is a three-day, intensive leadership camp which takes place in our local mountains and is organized by Rotary clubs and districts in the area.

The purpose of RYLA is to build up our future leaders by creating programs that will help them develop their leadership and problem-solving skills and by offering them unique opportunities to learn from other community leaders, inspirational speakers and peer mentors, while encouraging them to have fun and form lasting friendships with other student leaders in their community and around the world.

After Emily returned from her RYLA camp, she really could not say enough about her personal experiences and the amazing friends she met from all walks of life. The Laguna Beach Rotary Club sponsors at least four LBHS students per year for RYLA at \$425 per camper. We do not have a specific fundraiser for RYLA, so we depend on the generosity of our club members and our club foundation to continue this program going forward.

The Rotary Club Foundation is offering a February RYLA challenge to all Laguna Beach Rotarians who would like to help us send future LBHS students to a RYLA camp. For every dollar you donate to RYLA, I will personally match up to \$2,000. And for every dollar I donate to RYLA, my company will match up to \$2,000 for RYLA. **Therefore, for every student we send to RYLA camp, two additional students** will have the same opportunity, up to 14 total students if we complete this challenge. And remember, **all contributions are tax deductible**. If you would like to join us, please make your checks payable to The Laguna Beach Rotary Club Foundation and write “RYLA” on the memo line. Thank you!



During my presidency, the one thing most Laguna Beach Rotarians remember is the night that I kissed a pig. Bill and Melinda Gates started a new campaign to end polio once and for all. They said that for every dollar raised through Rotary for the eradication of polio, they would give two dollars. This program was called Polio Plus. As a club, we decided to hold a fundraiser in a local restaurant, where some of the money spent at the restaurant that evening would go to fund our Polio Plus pledge. On top of this, some of the members of our club decided that we could have a separate fundraiser/competition amongst ourselves, as long as we all agreed that one of us would be willing to kiss a pig for Polio Plus. The person who was given the privilege of kissing the pig would be the one who had the most money raised in their name during the weeks leading up to our fundraiser dinner. Therefore, Rotarians would pick a member they wanted to see kiss the pig and would donate money to that member's name, against that member's will, of course. It actually ended up raising quite a bit of money.

From memory, during the Rotary meeting just before the fundraiser dinner, we had about five Rotarians who had hundreds of dollars donated to their names and one or two had over \$1,000 each. Fortunately, I was not in the running at that time, so I was personally really enjoying this fundraiser and could not wait to see which of the two \$1,000+ Rotarians had to kiss the pig. I will never forget showing up to the

dinner. Two Rotarians, who were husband and wife Rotarians, greeted me with smiles like I have never seen before, like the cat that ate the canary.

I asked them, "What's so funny?" and they replied "You'll see" as they broke out in laughter. It was at that very moment I knew – *I'm going to be kissing a pig tonight.*

Turns out this Rotarian couple made a last minute donation in my name for several thousand dollars. So, a few minutes after we finished our fundraiser dinner, one of the largest pigs I have ever seen came walking down Forest Avenue. A crowd gathered outside around the pig, the local newspaper reporter was positioning their camera in order to capture the perfect picture and then, I heard my name. It was time. I walked towards that massive pig, as the crowd separated in laughter and got down on my hands and knees in my dress slacks in order to meet the pig at eye level. Then, I made my move and planted a long, wet kiss on the snotty snout of that beautiful creature. Legend has it that it was actually the pig who pulled away first. The next week I found myself in a picture covering the entire page of the local newspaper, just in case anyone in town missed the actual event. I soon became known as "the guy

who kissed the pig." Over the next few months, the swine flu was making news around the globe which, I believe, is the reason this became a one-time fundraiser. To our club's credit though, there was an article written about this event in the Rotarian magazine that year and we raised a ton of money for the Polio Plus campaign.

USA

Members of the Rotary Club of Laguna Beach, Calif., raised \$3,500 for Rotary's US\$200 Million Challenge in March with the help of a potbellied pig named Wilhelm. In exchange for a donation toward polio eradication, club members could nominate candidates for the honor of kissing Wilhelm. Additional donations allowed club members to vote for the Rotarian they most wanted to see kiss the pig. The candidates themselves also raised money from non-Rotarian friends and business associates. With a gentlemanlike flourish, the winner – then-club president Tory Thomas – presented Wilhelm with candy and flowers before the big smooch.



R.I. Magazine

