

This Week
A Double
Program, starting
Early – 11:30a

• • •

District-Wide
Business Plan
Competition
Guest Host:
Ray Carlson ...
Starting at 11:30a

The 2nd Annual District 5300 Business Plan Competition will be Thursday, May 31, 11:30a - 12n, with lunch at 12:10p and the PCC awards thereafter. Your attendance is important as we evolve our decade-long Dewey Merrill Awards of Excellence into a District-wide program and then to multi-district competitions. Contact C. Ray Carlson 626-797-5462 or crayc@me.com for details.

PCC Vocational
Student Awards
Guest Host:
Dennis Mehringer ...
Starting at 12n

Fifty years ago this month, the Altadena Rotary Club began the tradi-

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View by President
 Tony Hill
from the Hill

Mission Accomplished!
I am now a US Citizen ...

Well, believe it or not, as of Thursday May 24, this great country accepted me as a new citizen. As you know, I announced at the beginning of my year as President that the person that you had just chosen to be the President of the Rotary Club of Altadena, was not a US citizen. However, I promised that during my Rotary year, I would start the process of becoming a citizen and keep you the members informed of each step along the way. Well my trip on that long and winding personal journey has finally come to an end.

This morning [Thursday, May 24] Gordon and Marsha Seyffert joined my daughter Chelsea and me on my drive to the LA Convention Center for the citizenship ceremony. We arrived there one hour before the scheduled start time, and we were immediately split up, with friends and family directed to go ahead into the auditorium, and myself and others there to become citizens directed to go to the end of a very long line outside the building. After walking along a line of people six or seven persons wide for what seemed like two city blocks, I finally

reached the end.

Standing in line with this mass of humanity I struck up a conversation with a friendly gentleman who happened to be standing beside me. His name was Ruben Gonzalez. As we chatted I told him how I had decided to make my becoming a US citizen a personal project in my year as President of my Rotary Club. He flashed a warm smile and said "did you



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Greeters

- May 31
Linda Wilkes
- June 07
Hal Yorke
- June 14
Mike Zoeller



Program Review

A Chile Reception

Five Group Study Exchange (GSE) Rotarians from District 4320 in Chile graced our meeting, regaling us with stories of visits to Disneyland, JPL, the Wrigley mansion, USC, and Hoover Dam visits and other clubs visits in the district and what they liked best about California. Notable was



Francisca Menendez

Francisca Menendez of Valparaiso who particularly liked feeding the squirrels at JPL. Hal Yorke commented that she could have waited around to feed the deer too!

Our VIP visitors have been hosted by numerous clubs in the district and by Rotarian host families during their visit here. Participating Rotarians have opened their homes and provided an extensive *shadowing* itinerary for our visiting Chilean Hospital Administrator (Edgar Ibarra), Lawyer (Alison Wiegand), Medical Doctor (Fernando Velasquez), Journalist (Francisca Menendez) and English Teacher (Claudia Pizarro) who is visiting her first English speaking country. (I'm quite sure she found some of our idiomatic treatment of English interest-



Edgar Ibarra



Claudia Pizarro

ing!)

The idea of hosting professional businessmen and women from other nations, wining and dining them, making friends and sharing our culture, technology and understanding of commonalities is a sure way to spread good will among the peoples of the world. The critical exchange of ideas and appreciation garnered in the process has made our respective cultures richer and more vibrant, i.e., Chile is now home to some of the worlds most advanced astronomical observatories and telescopes, creating a natural affinity to Pasadena and JPL. And both the quality and price of superb Chilean wines are giving California a run for its money!

We were extremely pleased to have our Chilean friends, Alison Wiegand, Francisca



Fernando Velasquez



Alison Wiegand

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Rotary Club of Altadena - #7183

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Hal Yorke Vocational/Youth Projects
Craig Cox Membership

Editor, Design & Typesetting Foreman Graphics
Photography Jacque Foreman

May Programs

No Designation

Program Chair, Julius Johnson

May 31 - Business Plan Awards & the PCC awards — **Meeting starts at 11:30a**

June Programs

Fellowship Month

Program Chair, Ed Jasnow

Jun 07 - JROTC Awards
Jun 14 - Teacher Mini-Grant Reports
Jun 21 - Jeffrey Piece, Stifel, Nicolaus & Co.,
- The Warren Buffet Investment
Jun 28 - Demotion Party - An evening Event

Congratulations



Birthdays



05/05 - Ursula Moore

05/15 - Elsa Smith

05/18 - Craig Cox

05/30 - Susan Applegate

Anniversaries

05/18 - Tony Hill & Ann Rider

05/19 - Roger & Kathleen Anne Fennell

Chairmen's Corner



It's that time of the Rotary year when it's appropriate to thank those who have helped me maintain the quality of *Sparks*. If you read this newsletter, you see *bylines*

on two very important columns that appear weekly: the Chairman's Corner and the Program Review.

Each column has six members who rotate to make this happen. For the program review: Craig Cox, John Frykenberg,

Not Quite a Village

by Jacquie Foreman, Public Awareness Chair

Boyd Hudson, Ed Jasnow, Sammy Kayali, and Gordon Seyffert. For the committee chair articles: Craig Cox does double duty as both the Foundation and Membership Chair, Ed Jasnow is Community Chair, John Frykenberg is International Chair, Gordon Seyffert and Hal Yorke split the duties of the Youth/New Generations Chair, and I have been the Public Awareness Chair.

Then we have two regular columnists: Linda Wilkes writes about *Money Matters*, and Gordon Seyffert has his own *Corner*.

Thank you all.

Program

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Menendez, Claudia Pizarro, Fernando Velasquez and Edgar Ibarra (team leader) bring their vision to Altadena along with their smiles and willingness to carry our reciprocal message of friendship and brotherhood of mankind back to Chile.

Thanks for coming!



Flag Exchange. (l to r) Fernando Velasquez, David Smith, Theo Clarke, and Edgar Ibarra

John Frykenberg

View

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notice my tie?" When I looked, I saw he was wearing a very attractive Rotary tie. This established an immediate bond between us. We remained together throughout the check-in process that lay ahead and sat together throughout the ceremony itself.

Ruben is a two-time past-president and a charter member of the Rotary Club of Rosamond, California (up by Lancaster) since its inception in 1987. The Rosamond club is one of those clubs that has just been transferred into our District 5300. We chatted about Rotary and our experiences as President. We discussed our astonishment at the size of the crowd in line to become new citizens. I estimated the crowd of incoming citizens at 2,000 people, and Ruben estimated the group at twice that. Later Gordon told me that he had calculated the group of new citizens almost dead on (3500 was his estimate) by counting the empty chairs while he was waiting for all of us to be processed. The exact total was 3,504.

Although the process at first seemed a little chaotic, in hindsight I realized that it was very well organized. It was admirable how the organizers efficiently moved so

many participants through the process insuring that all the necessary steps had been followed for each one of the 3,504 applicants. The entire process took a little over three hours. The auditorium at the LA Convention Center was set up as a Federal Court with a real federal judge presiding. He told a story about a young woman who came to America from eastern Europe with no money. She got a job as a seamstress and worked hard. She married a hard working man and together they made sure that all of their children went to college. Then the judge revealed that that woman was his mother. He pointed out that he and all of us were fortunate to have the opportunity to become citizens of this great country and we should do what we can to give back. Ruben and I agreed that our service in Rotary gives us a way to do just that.

Anyway, I am very happy to now be officially part of a country that I have admired since I was a young boy. And to celebrate this momentous event, as promised, I will host a party for all Altadena

Rotary members at a date and time to be announced. Right now I am thinking that it will take place at my home on a Saturday afternoon in July, prior to one of the summer concerts at Farnsworth Park, which is within walking distance of my house. Hope you will join me then to help me celebrate the completion of my personal Rotary project in my year as President.





MONEY by Linda Wilkes MATTERS

Last Week in the News

The National Association of Home Builders/Wells Fargo monthly housing market index rose five points in May to 29. It was the best reading since May 2007. An index reading below 50 indicates negative sentiment about the housing market.

The combined construction of new single-family homes and apartments in April rose 2.6 percent to a seasonally adjusted annual rate of 717,000 units. Single-family starts increased 2.3 percent. Multi-family starts rose 4.3 percent. Compared to a year ago, housing starts are up 29.9 percent. Applications for new building permits, seen as an indicator of future activity, fell 7 percent to an annual rate of 715,000 units.

Industrial production at the nation's factories, mines and utilities in April increased 1.1 percent, the most since December 2010, after a 0.6 percent decline in March. Compared to a year ago, industrial production is up 5.2 percent. Capacity utilization in April improved to 79.2 percent, the highest output since April 2008. Retail sales rose 0.1 percent to \$408 billion in April. This follows a downwardly revised 0.7 percent increase in March. On a year-over-year basis, retail sales increased 6.4 percent. The Mortgage Bankers Association said its seasonally adjusted composite index of mortgage applications for the week ending May 11 rose 9.2 percent. Refinancing applications increased 13 percent. Purchase volume fell 2.4 percent.

Consumer prices were unchanged in April, following a 0.3 percent increase in March. Compared to a year ago, consumer prices are up 2.3 percent. Initial claims for unemployment benefits for the week ending May 12 were unchanged at 370,000 from the prior week. Continuing claims for the week ending May 5 rose by

18,000 to 3.265 million.

Upcoming on the economic calendar are reports on existing home sales on May 22, new home sales on May 23 and durable goods orders on May 24.

Industry Insider

The Remodeling Market 2012

Home improvement activity has been increasing gradually as homeowners choose to either purchase and renovate homes in need of repair or remain in and improve their current home.


In the fourth quarter of 2011, remodeling sentiment rose to its highest level in five years, according to the National Association of Home Builders' (NAHB) Remodeling Market Index (RMI).

The RMI remained relatively flat in the first quarter of 2012, decreasing one point to 47. The three components measuring current market conditions moved in different directions in the first quarter: major additions remained even at 44, minor additions rose one point to 52, and main-

tenance and repair dropped four points to 51.

Though the index has been improving, a reading below 50 indicates negative sentiment about the remodeling market. The RMI has been running below 50 since the final quarter of 2005.

Another remodeling index is showing similar results. The Leading Indicator of Remodeling Activity (LIRA) projects annual spending will see growth in 2012, ending the year up 5.9 percent. The LIRA — released by the Remodeling Futures Program at the Joint Center for Housing Studies of Harvard University — is designed to estimate national homeowner spending on improvements for the current quarter and subsequent three quarters.

If you know someone considering making home improvements, the NAHB provides extensive resources, including a *Directory of Professional Remodelers*. 

Find Linda Wilkes on line: <http://www.myprospectmortgage.com/lwilkes>

This Week


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tion of recognizing the top students of Pasadena City College. When I joined this club in 1992 Dr. Bill Gannon was the gracious host who kept our name and eruption alive in Pasadena and Altadena with this program that supports education.

We are so fortunate that students of all ages in our area can go back to school to sharpen their skills or gain new skills in this ever changing fast paced world economy. Today we have high unemployment after the deepest recession since the Great Depression. However, few of us realize that there are actually more job openings in the USA than unemployed. Plus with 10,000 people a day retiring (according to Prudential), the un-

employed need a place like PCC to develop skills in the occupations that need more skilled labor.

More than 25,000 students attend PCC during a school year. These students work hard at menial jobs or live off of unemployment or student loans. With the budget for extra financial aid bone dry at the state level, we Rotarians are needed to fill the gap of recognition that is impossible for PCC itself to afford. So our 25 scholarships this Thursday are an essential element supporting the public/private partnership between PCC and Altadena Rotary.

This program makes me solo proud to be a Rotarian. 

Frontier Comparisons

Recently I was browsing in an area used book store when something caught my eye. A professor at the University of Chicago had submitted an article for the 1915 annual report of the American Historical Association on "East German Colonization in the Middle Ages." Now, it's not often that I see something that makes particular reference to the non-western part of Germany without referencing the Cold War era DDR. So I bought the book and took it home to peruse.

What I found especially interesting in this treatment of *East Germany* is the comparison with our American westward expansion. This had been written only a couple of decades following the appearance of the explosive Turner thesis — named after noted historian Frederick Jackson Turner. Briefly, that had noted in 1893 that the American West was then closed to further pioneering through its own success in attracting settlers.

Turner thought that this development might have adverse effects upon America's ability to sustain its uniqueness as a nation, one founded upon personal liberty and the ability to reinvent oneself free of the constraints found in established societies. Here are some quotations from this piece:

- What Prof. Turner has called "the common sequence of frontier types—fur trader, cattle raising, pioneer, small primitive farmer" — is true of the frontier of medieval Germany... These pioneers were chiefly engaged in cattle raising. Court judgments in this region were imposed in cattle fines under Otto I, and the legislation shows the preva-

lence of agrarian crime, especially cattle stealing.

- But the Saxon greed for the Wendish lands was like the American pioneer's appetite for the hunting grounds of the Indians. In the summer of 1066 a third Wendish and pagan rebellion broke out. A new and compact Slavonic State, as a result, was established in Nordalbingia [*i.e.*, North Brandenburg].... The border situation was as if here in America Pontiac's conspiracy in 1763 had been successful, and the Indian tribes west of the Alleghanies combined.
- ...it was natural that the "New East" beyond the Elbe beckoned to the Saxons of the twelfth century much as the "New West" beckoned to the American pioneer. In both cases, the sparsely populated back lands tempted men from the more settled regions. The frontier of medieval Germany lay "at the edge of free land" as truly as did the American frontier. The increasing economic and social pressure in the older parts of Saxony and elsewhere pushed the hardier and the braver spirits across the line.
- ...as in America in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries the blockhouse guarded the frontier settlements against Indian foray, so in the debated land between the Saxon and the Slav timbered castles [in the twelfth century] protected the sparse and scattered pioneer German population. "Around them ... the settlers clustered, but in great fear of attacks."
- The result of the reduction of the Wagri

and Obodrites by Adolph of Holstein and Henry the Lion in 1143 was a large influx of German immigrants into the trans-Elbian lands, which were thrown open to settlement.... Nothing so much resembles it as the American *rush* after the War of 1812 into the Western Reserve and the Ohio Valley.

- The hardy rustics who tilled their little farms redeemed from marsh and swamp and forest in Ditmarsch and Holstein, in Mecklenburg and Brandenburg, were men like unto our own ancestors in conditions of livelihood, in courage, in hope, in perseverance. Life on the east German border then was rude and crude and impinged as sharply upon the feelings of the cultured and refined society of older Germany as the Kentucky of Boone grated upon the sensibilities of staid tidewater communities like Baltimore or Philadelphia.

The conclusion of this treatment suggests that all societies have had such painful periods of development, if only we could reach back in time to the initial settlements by nonnative peoples. For much of Germany such struggles predate written records. However, recent archeological finds are shedding some light on the Battle of the Teutoburg Forest between the Romans and the Germanic Cherusci led by Arminius, a/k/a Hermann. And DNA testing has begun to inform us to a degree about the migrations of our ancestors.

Like JPL explorations into the origins of our universe, the curtain parts ever so slowly.



Job Creation & Entrepreneurship by C. Ray Carlson

This Lofty Goal, of Building Peace

'How exactly are we going to achieve this lofty goal, of building peace?' asked RI President Kalyan Banerjee in his closing remarks at the 103rd International Con-

vention in Bangkok last week. He expanded on this with *'Peace is... the ability to enjoy your life. Living in peace means that you can wake up in*

the morning at home with your family, do your job during the day, have your family together again at night, go to sleep without having to worry about whether there will be shooting on the roads tomorrow, or whether you will be able to walk to the market in the morning, or which child will not go to school because you need her to carry the water from the village pond. ...that is when we get peace, when people are able to live their lives, to enjoy their lives, when they don't have to fight just to survive. When people help each other because it's the right thing to do. When people who need help are able to find it, and don't have to struggle alone.

Enjoying life and not worrying about tomorrow are hallmarks of peace, according to this. Rotary's first five Areas of Focus may bring a more satisfactory and even prolonged life. But without a means of livelihood — a job, an income — the resultant suffering will not bring much peace to a household or a nation or the World. And especially to the New Generation which suffers the most in a jobless economy. They have been rioting in the

streets as a result. *April Spring* in the Middle East, *Occupy Wall Street* and growing numbers of cities are evidence. Many tens of millions of new jobs must be cre-



Kalayan Banerjee (I) with C. Ray Carlson at the 2012 RI Convention

ated each year just to satisfy the increased population of the Earth. And multiple times that to lift the current global impoverished to an *enjoyable life*.

It will take many entrepreneurs and the start of many new businesses and the hiring of many employees to soak up the endemic poverty in most of the World. I believe that the army of 1.2 Million Rotarians can provide the business-savvy needed to spawn many new businesses and jobs for the New Generation (18-30) that are frustrated by the dwindling job opportunities upon graduation from secondary schools, colleges and universities.


My optimism is engendered by experiences like I had in recent weeks — one in nearby Monrovia High School in California where teacher Scott Sorgent invited me to come and listen to his students give oral PowerPoint presentations of their written business plans. It is very exciting to find public school instructors like Sorgent who are totally competent in the use of Excel software to develop spread-



sheets of the cash flow of a proposed business. And the excitement and fervor of the students bodes well for at least a few of them to actually start a business some day.

The other experience was in meeting with a team of six members of Mid-SFV Rotary Club in Van Nuys, California, whose President, Barbara Pampalone, asked that they be trained and made familiar with the curriculum I use so they could teach *Entrepreneurship* and *How to Write Business Plans* to local high school students. Their enthusiasm and evident skill-set of business practices and wisdom, just as I found earlier with Chino Rotary under the leadership of President Terry Franke, have convinced me that we are on the right track to proliferate Job Creation & Entrepreneurship on a massive scale in the coming months and years. They are eager to pass on this legacy to the New Generation while they still can and where the need is as urgent as it is in this grim economy.

The most convincing proof for me are the surveys in Sweden of those that had completed an entrepreneurship class 10 years earlier in high school. They revealed that more than 1 in 5 actually started a business and hired an average of 4 others — making 5 jobs for every 5 trained. And at training costs that are minuscule when compared with the future payroll tax revenues from those employed. This motivated Swedish government agencies to become involved and provide financial support for one-half the training, along with the private sector for the other half.

Building peace can be achieved by Rotarians through Vocational Service that stimulates Job Creation and Entrepreneurship, locally and around the World. Let's proliferate this concept. 

Keeping our Promise ... *Flags go up for Memorial Day, etc.*



Saturday, May 26, 2012