

Rotary Club of Altadena

Sparks

OFF THE ROTARY WHEEL
AN AWARD-WINNING NEWSLETTER



May 19, 2016

This Week

**Bill Toone,
Executive Director,
ECOLIFE
Conservation,
Helping to Build an
Harmonious Planet
Program Host:
Ed Jasnow**

Starting his career as a wildlife biologist with the San Diego Zoo, Bill Toone studied the endangered California condor and the causes of its decline. That work grew into a conservation program of world renown, and Toone soon found himself featured in newspapers and magazines, sitting next to Johnny Carson on *The Tonight Show*, and filming wildlife documentaries in the Costa Rican rainforests with Olivia Newton-John.

But there was more to Toone than being a *media darling*. With his expertise in demand, he performed conservation work in some of the most remote regions of the world. From Honduras and Paraguay to Cameroon and Papua, New Guinea, he not only witnessed incredible wildlife spectacles, but also came in contact with some of the poorest, and

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Quietly Quick

by Steve Cunningham, *President*

The Inner Body *Being is Your Deepest Self*

from
The Power of Now
by *Eckhart Tolle*

The body can become a point of access into the realm of Being. Let's go into that more deeply now.

"Water? What do you mean by that? I don't understand it." This is what a fish would say if it had a human mind.

Please stop trying to understand Being. You have already had significant glimpses of Being, but the mind will always try to squeeze it into a little box and then put a label on it. It cannot be done. It cannot become an object of knowledge. In *Being*, subject and object merge into one.

Being can be *felt* as the ever-present *I am* that is beyond name and form. To feel and thus to know that you *are* and to abide in that deeply rooted state is enlightenment, is the truth that Jesus says will make you free.

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*Free from what?*

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Free from the illusion that you are

nothing more than your physical body and your mind. This "illusion of the self," as the Buddha calls it, is the core error. Free from *fear* in its countless disguises as the inevitable consequence of that illusion — the fear that is your constant tormentor as long as you derive your sense of self only from this ephemeral and vulnerable form. And free from sin, which is the suffering you unconsciously inflict on yourself and others as long as this illusory sense of self governs what you

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May Team

Dennis Mehringer • David Campbell
Boyd Hudson • Steve Kerekes
Roger Fennell

Meeting Responsibilities

- Setup • Greeter •
- Flag Salute • Song •
- Inspirational Presentation •
- Happy Bucks • 4-Way Test •
- Takedown •

Program Review

Scholarship Award Day



Last Thursday marked a very fun day for Altadena Rotary. It was the day that Altadena Rotary gives

scholarships to deserving students in the community.

Those in attendance were delighted, as the meeting was started by the Blair High

School Color Guard, with the presentation of our countries colors.



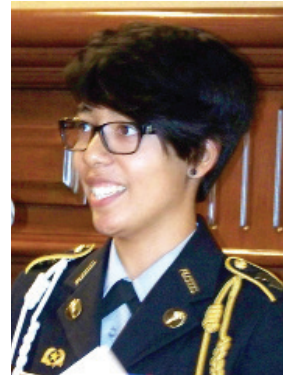
With many students in uniform, the JROTC scholarships were the first awards given out. Due to budget cuts, the JROTC programs at John Muir and Pasadena High Schools were dismantled. Instead of the \$1,000 awards given out to JROTC recipients in the past, now there are 3-\$2,000 scholarships given to those recipients from Blair High School. Sergeant Ervin Turner, retired from the US Army, is the



head of the JROTC program at Blair. He spoke about the accomplishments of his cadets. He stated that the cadets average 7,000 service hours a year. He also stated that all of the cadets show up for their commitments, with a real *gung ho* attitude.

Turner stated that, out of the 500 students at Blair High School, 135 are in the JROTC program. He thanked the Rotarians, and stated that these scholarships “take some financial strain off the parents.”

The first JROTC scholarship was given to Stephanie Munguia. Munguia was made the unit commander. She will be attending UCLA



in the fall, with a Micro biology and neuroscience major. The next scholarship was given to Richard Conell. Conell was in charge of the Color Guard. He joined JROTC, following in his brother’s footsteps. He will be

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Rotary Club of Altadena - #7183

Chartered: February 14, 1949
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 Meets: Thursday, 12:10p
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 Craig Cox.....Community
 John Frykenberg.....International
 Tony Hill.....Youth Contests/Awards
 Mike Zoeller.....Youth Projects
 Ray Carlson.....Vocational
 Tom McCurry.....Asst. Vocational

Editor, Design & Typesetting.....Foreman Graphics
 Photography.....Jacque Foreman

May No Designation

Program Chair, Ed Jasnow

May 12 - ROTC Scholarship Awards - Tom McCurry, Guest Host
 May 19 - Bill Toone, Executive Director, EcoLife Foundation
 May 26 - PCC Vocational Awards - Dennis Mehringer, Guest Host

Congratulations



Birthdays



5/15 - Elsa Smith
 5/18 - Craig Cox



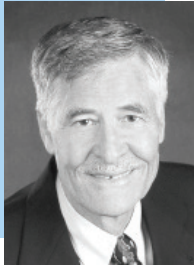
5/30 - Susan Applegate

Anniversaries



5/18 - Tony & Ann Rider Hill
 5/19 - Roger & Kathleen Fennell

Another Year in the Bag



As we approach the end of our 2015-16 Rotary year, many of our Youth and Community projects are scheduled for completion and

presentation to the club. A lot of hard work and effort comes together in a short period of time, and our weekly meetings become full to the brim with students, teachers, parents and Rotary members all vying for a table and chair.

We had a large contingent of Teachers from local middle schools visiting the club to describe how they spent the money from the club's Mini-Grant program, which this year provided \$400 to each of 35 teachers from the PSUD system. The mileage that these dedicated teachers can get from \$400 is remarkable, and the return that the club members get from hearing about the benefits that students get from the grants is priceless.

During this period, the club hosted the JROTC students and instructors from Blair High School as they received cash awards and recognition for their efforts during the year. This year, three JROTC students received \$2,000 awards, along with awards to deserving students from Muir and Eliot.

We will also be hearing from our selected Altadena Club high school juniors who attended this year's RYLA program at Thousand Pines Camp in Crestline, California in April. The kids will tell the club how the experience contributed to

their leadership skills and other fun details of the event.

Also, our PCC Veterans Awards program brought many PCC students who have already served our country and came to the club to be recognized and presented with cash awards totaling \$6,000 this year.

Finally, we will wrap up the month with the completion of our Spring Project as we host breakfast and lunch for those participating in the 2016 American Cancer Society *Relay for Life* to be held in Farnsworth Park on June 4.

Rotarians will be flipping pancakes and grilling hot dogs for more than 100 participants who will be walking and running throughout the day to bring in sponsored contributions to combat cancer. We hope

to see many of you there to cheer the walkers on.

And, while I still have the floor, let me thank all of the Project Chairs for this year. Craig Cox again headed the Community Projects, and he and his team had another banner year. Our International Projects Chair, John Frykenberg, and his team also turned in a great performance with yet another trip to Nigeria to add to our service to the youth of Nigeria trying to build a society under difficult circumstances. Vocational chair Ray Carlson continues to amaze. His efforts seem to be redoubled as he is seemingly everywhere campaigning for jobs for the world. Finally, my thanks to Tony Hill and the Youth Activities team for another great year of RYLA and Interact. ○

Program

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attending Cal State Monterey, with an Environmental Studies degree. He stated that he wants to help heal the world for future generations.

The third JROTC student from Blair High School was Tessa Matthews. Matthews, a 4 year JROTC member, was in



charge of promoting the program in the community. She stated that the ROTC program changed her life. She said the program taught her to become a leader, and that it was one of the best experiences anyone could have. She will be attending Northwest



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Program

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College in the fall, pursuing a major in Dentistry. Her goal is “to make a difference in the world.”

The next scholarships given out were Academic Achievement Awards. These scholarships were given out to students from Elliot Middle School. The recipients were introduced by Karen Coors of Elliot Middle School.

The first recipient was Adolpho Carrada. Carrada is a musician and member of the jazz band. He has a 4.0 gpa, and will be attending PHS in the fall.

The next student was Illiana de la Torre. De la Torre was student of the month several times at Elliot Middle School. She volunteers her time and enjoys helping others. She will also be attending PHS in the fall.

The last

scholarships given out, were Academic Achievement Awards, given to two students from John Muir High School. Nancy Heusser, a counselor at Muir High School, was there to introduce the students.

The first recipient was Diego Obregon, a senior. He was very involved at Muir High School, and a part of many clubs.



Obregon will be attending UCLA in the fall and hopes to be part of the swim club.

The last recipient of a scholarship was Victoria Pulcifer. Pulcifer has a 4.0 gpa, and is the class valedictorian. She is very involved at Muir High School, and part of the drama club. She was also part of ROTC, before

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This Week

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most poorly understood, populations of people.

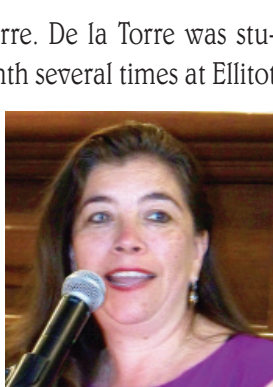
Working in Madagascar to help create a national park, his life took a significant turn while living in the remote village of Antanambao. Toone's integration into the primitive village was facilitated by his befriending the family of a little five-year-old named Elian. It was a relationship so deep that on his departure to return home, Elian's family begged him to take little Elian with him, so the boy could find a better future in the United States — an entreaty which, for several reasons, was impossible for Toone to fulfill. Soon thereafter, both Antanambao and nearly everyone who lived there, were swept away by the historic Cyclone Hudah.

Bill was shocked to learn that not one of the conservation agencies with which he had worked — in Madagascar and elsewhere — were interested in helping the victims of Hudah. It seems people were not part of their missions. He understood at that moment the depths to which people and their environments are inextricably joined ... that one cannot work to

save endangered species, or endangered places, without working as well to protect and improve the lives of the people who live near them.

So he created ECOLIFE Conservation, an organization dedicated to a world in which humans and nature live harmoniously. Toone and ECOLIFE build stoves in remote villages that improve the lives of families and reduce tree cutting for fuel. They install water-harvesting systems, and create programs to help people feed themselves healthy food, rather than plants and animals poached from the forests.

He continues to work and study at home and in such places as Mexico, Kenya, Tanzania, and Uganda. And his stories — whether gathered just this Fall in an encounter with wild gorillas, or 26 years ago on live TV with Johnny Carson — delight and thrill audiences. His are presentations that provide insight into your own home as well as our natural world, while taking you on a terrific adventure and offering you hope for a planet in which humans, plants, and animals can provide mutual assurance of wellness and security. ○



Quietly

Continued from p. 1

think, say and do.

Look beyond the words.

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*I don't like the word sin. It implies that I am being judged and found guilty.*

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I can understand that. Over the centuries, many erroneous views and interpretations have accumulated around words such as *sin*, due to ignorance, misunderstanding, or a desire to control, but they contain an essential core of truth. If you are unable to look beyond such interpretations and so cannot recognize the reality to which the word points, then don't use it. Don't get stuck on the level of words. A word is no more than a means to an end. It's an abstraction. Not unlike a signpost, it points beyond itself. The word *honey* isn't honey. You can study and talk about honey for as long as you like, but you won't *really know* it until you taste it. After you have tasted it, the word becomes less important to you. You won't be attached to it anymore. Similarly, you can talk or think about *God* continuously for the rest of your life, but does that mean you know or have even glimpsed the reality to which the word points? It really is no more than an obsessive attachment to a signpost, a mental idol.

The reverse also applies: If, for whatever reason, you disliked the word *honey*, that might prevent you from ever tasting it. If you had a strong aversion to the word *God*, which is a negative form of attachment, you may be denying not just the word but also the reality to which it points. You would be cutting yourself off from the possibility of experiencing that reality. All this is, of course, intrinsically connected with being identified with mind.

So, if a word doesn't work for you anymore, then drop it and replace it with one that does work. If you don't like the

word *sin*, then call it unconsciousness or insanity. That may get you closer to the truth, the reality behind the word, than a long-misused word like *sin*, and leaves little room for guilt.

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*I don't like those words either. They imply that there is something wrong with me. I am being judged.*

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Of course there is something wrong with you — and you are not being judged.

I don't mean to offend you personally, but do you not belong to the human race that killed over one hundred million members of its own species in the twentieth century alone?

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*You mean guilt by association?*

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It is not a question of guilt. But as long as you are run by the egoic mind, you are part of the collective insanity. Perhaps you haven't looked very deeply into the human condition in its state of dominance by the egoic mind. Open your eyes and see the fear, the despair, the greed, and the violence that are all-pervasive. See the heinous cruelty and suffering on an un-imaginable scale that humans have inflicted and continue to inflict on each other as well as on other life forms on the planet. You don't need to condemn. Just observe. That is *sin*. That is insanity. That is unconsciousness. Above all, don't forget to observe your own mind. Seek out the root of the insanity there.

**Finding Your Invisible
and Indestructible Reality**

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*You said that identification with our physical form is part of the illusion, so how can the body, the physical form, bring you to a realization of Being?*

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The body that you can see and touch cannot take you into Being. But that visible and tangible body is only an outer shell, or rather a limited and distorted perception of a deeper reality. In your natural state of connectedness with Being, this deeper reality can be felt every moment as the invisible inner body, the animating presence within you. So to *inhabit the body* is to feel the body from within, to feel the life inside the body and thereby come to know that you are beyond the outer form.

But that is only the beginning of an inward journey that will take you ever more deeply into a realm of great stillness and peace, yet also of great power and vibrant life.

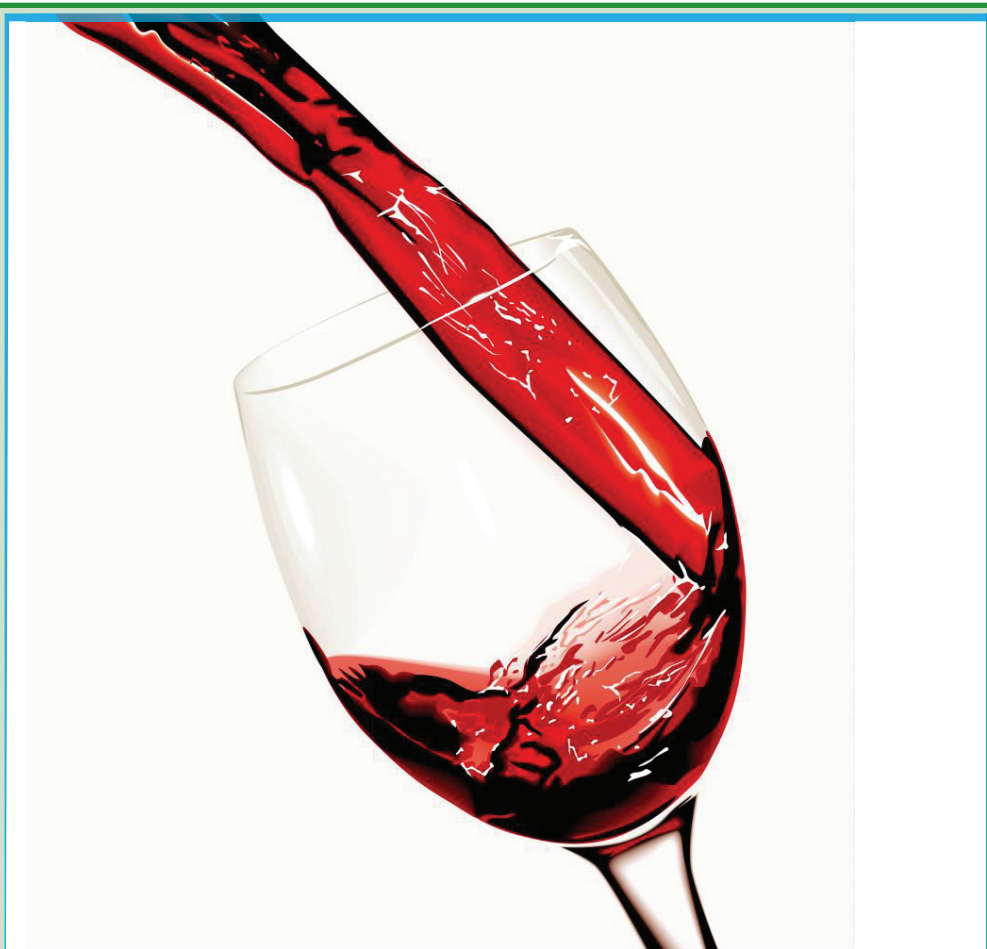
At first, you may only get fleeting glimpses of it, but through them you will begin to realize that you are not just a meaningless fragment in an alien universe, briefly suspended between birth and death, allowed a few short-lived pleasures followed by pain and ultimate annihilation. Underneath your outer form, you are connected with something so vast, so immeasurable and sacred, that it cannot be conceived or spoken of — yet I am speaking of it now. I am speaking of it not to give you something to believe in but to show you how you can know it for yourself. ○

Program

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it was dropped from the school. She will be attending Stanford in the fall, pursuing a computer science and graphic design degree.

All of the students who received scholarships were very appreciative, and thanked Altadena Rotary. Because of the gifts, Altadena Rotary was able to help a lot of deserving students. John Casci ○



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Sunday, May 22, 2016

3pm – 5pm

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District Wine Tasting
Event!

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and includes a tasting of
six Spanish wines and
snacks.

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