

Rotary Club of Altadena

Sparks

OFF THE ROTARY WHEEL
AN AWARD-WINNING NEWSLETTER



October 12, 2017

This Week
Kapasa Musonda,
Owner, Mangishi-
Doll Fashions
Lusaka, Zambia
Program Host:
Ray Carlson

We are very excited to have Kapasa Musonda with us. She was here for three years, residing with the Noll's, while attending the world famous Fashion Institute of Design & Merchandising – FIDM, in LA.

She and seven other Zambian youth were here on a US State Department grant after training in Zambia. We brought them to businesses that conformed with their business plans.

So I brought her to meet my friend Dena Stitt at FIDM.

After several hours, there is so much to see, she brought us to meet the president and within minutes, Kapasa was offered a full scholarship if Rotary would care for her travel and lodging.

Kapasa was such an outstanding student that she was awarded a second year, then a third year for the annual Debut runway show which was spectacular.

She returned to Zambia and started her fashion design business which we will hear about. On Saturday Oct 14, she will show her fashions in the African Fashion Week runway show. ○



Dialing In

By Steve Kerekes,
President



Men and Women — Can't We just be Friends —

"Nobody will ever win the battle of the sexes. There is too much fraternizing with the enemy."

Henry Kissinger.



The past few weeks we have been exploring the theme of building better friendships. This week's particular strain of this theme is friendship between a man and a woman. Is pure friendship between them truly possible ... when, and under what circumstances. This week's selection continues to be taken from Joseph Epstein's excellent book, Friendship – An Exposé (Houghton Mifflin Co., 2006, pps. 125-139).



Odd to think so, but friendship, like race, had long been under the cruel and wasteful, if unlegislated, rule of segregation. Women have always found friendships with other women, and men with men. But the crossover possibility – that of male-female friendships – outside sexual interest, has only in recent years widened and greatly enlarged the realm of friendship in the modern world.

Exceptional people, however, have long enjoyed such friendships. The friendship dearest to Samuel Johnson, for example, was that with neither Edmund Burke nor James Boswell (who was nowhere near his equal), nor that with his wife (whom he loved), but with a woman named Hester Thrale, the wife of Henry Thrale, a successful London brewer. Their friendship began in 1765, when Johnson was fifty-five and Mrs. Thrale twenty-four. The Thrales, in an act of great compassion, rescued Johnson from a deep, possibly suicidal depression and took him to their country home, where he remained for three months, until, his spirits restored, his health regained, he was able to plunge back into life with his former ardor. After this, a room was always kept for Johnson in the Thrales' London and

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Greeter of the Week

October 12

Boyd Hudson

October 19

Ed Jasnow

October 26

Julius Johnson

Program Review

New Principal Lawton Gray has Big Plans for Muir High School



We were honored to have Lawton Gray, the new principal of

John Muir High School, as our guest speaker. Gray is an alumnus of Muir High School, a PUSD parent, and an experienced educational leader. He comes back to Pasadena from the Temple City Unified School



Pasadena High School and Marshall High School. The other components of his vision are that Muir students will be role models, to increase the enrollment, and increase parent participation.

He gave some interesting statistics. The current Muir enrollment is 70 percent Hispanic, 29 percent African American, and 1 percent *other*. All students at Muir are enrolled in one of three academies: the **Engineering and Environmental Science Academy**, the **Arts and Entertainment Media Academy**, or the **Business and Entrepreneurship Academy**.

Altadena Rotary Club has been involved in teaching entrepreneurship education at Muir for many years. We are very excited to have Lawton Gray as the new principal at Muir High School, and continuing our partnership with the High School. Our Altadena Rotary Charities Foundation, which received its funding from the Altadena American Legion Post when it closed down, has several stipulations regarding our activities at Muir High School, and we look forward to extending these efforts.

Tom McCurry ○

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Rotary Club of Altadena - #7183

Chartered: February 14, 1949

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www.altadenarotary.com

Meets: Thursday, 12:10p

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District, where he was named the 2011 Administrator of the Year by the California Association of School Counselors. He began his teaching career as a math teacher at Pasadena High School. He is a graduate of Morehouse College, and has a master's degree from Point Loma Nazarene University. His two children attend PUSD's Field Elementary School. He conducts school tours for prospective students and parents every Friday at 8:30a to encourage community members to see John Muir in action.

Principal Gray's vision is for Muir High School to be a Flagship School in the Pasadena Unified School District, along with

October

Economic & Community Development Program Chair, Ray Carlson

Oct. 12 - Kapasa Musonda, Owner Mangishi-Doll, Lusaka, Zambia
Oct. 19 - To be Announced
Oct. 26 - Assemblymember, Chris Holdon, 41st District, California Legislature

Congratulations

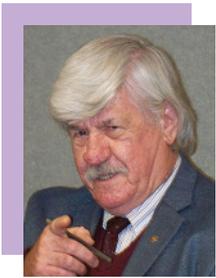
Birthdays

10/08 - Susan Cox
10/10 - Heather Campbell
10/17 - Noriko Suzuki Mehringer
10/20 - Charles Wilson
10/24 - Jim Gorton

Anniversaries

10/01 - Freddy & Margarita Figueroa
10/07 - Mendel & Helen Zivkovic Hill
10/19 - David & Elsa Smith

Muir High School Interactors Start their New Year



The Interact Club at John Muir High School, sponsored by our Rotary Club of Altadena, had its first meeting of the 2017/2018 school year last Friday afternoon. This begins the second year that our Club has sponsored the Interact Club at Muir. For a period of about 12 years prior to that, our Club had sponsored an Interact Club at Pasadena High School, and before that, for many many years we sponsored an Interact Club at Muir High School. Not all Rotary Clubs sponsor an Interact Club, but our Club has had a long tradition of doing so as we see it as so valuable to the youth in this community.

For our newer members, Interact is a Rotary program in which individual Rotary Clubs choose to sponsor an Interact Club at a local high school. The Interact Club is then run by the student's themselves. They choose a President, a secretary, a treasurer and other members of their executive. Our Interact Club at Muir holds a meeting once per month – this year that will be on the first Friday of each month at 1:00p. The Interact members meet in a classroom during their lunch break and eat their lunches while they conduct their meeting. Due to the limitation this presents, the meeting lasts for one-half hour. A teacher volunteers his or her time to act as a liaison between the school, the Interact members and the sponsoring Rotary Club. This teacher also makes his

or her classroom available for the Interact members to meet each month, and he or she remains at each meeting to be present to assist them if needed.

In addition to the teacher liaison at the school, we have been very fortunate in having a parent and a Muir alumni, Carina Jacobs, who attends each Interact meeting and who is very active in such things as assisting the Interactors running their meeting and getting them involved in their own community activities as well as helping out with our projects from time to time. For instance, although they had not yet had their first meeting of the year, Jacobs, along with some Interact students, did participate in our Triangle Park hand-on-project last weekend.

The Interact teacher liaison from last year left John Muir High School when he received a promotion at another school. The first Interact meeting for this school year was delayed by the necessity to find a new teacher who would be willing to make

his/her classroom available for Interact meetings, and be willing to volunteer his or her time in being present for each of those monthly meetings.

We are very grateful to Jacobs who, after much effort, has been able to find such a teacher, Janet Ho, who has graciously offered to assist Rotary by providing her classroom and her time to ensure the Interact members will have a place to meet in this school year. Without such selflessness of a teacher such as Ho, willing to oversee our Interact program at the school, and willing to work though her lunch break once a month, we could not have an Interact Club at Muir High School.

On behalf of the Rotary Club of Altadena, I extend our sincere appreciation to Carina Jacobs, to Janet Ho and, of course, to our Interact Chair, Steve Cunningham for all of their hard work in striving to make the Interact Club at John Muir High School a roaring success again this year. ○

Ben Green Welcomed into Altadena Rotary

Ben Green is welcomed into Altadena Rotary by President Steve Kerekes as he presents Green with his Rotary pin after his sponsor, Mike Zoeller, (r) had presented him with his Red Badge. Membership Chair, Craig Cox (l) is making sure that all is done properly. ○



Dialing

Continued from p. 1

country houses.

By the time she met Johnson, Hester Thrale was an accomplished woman. She spoke French as a child, later acquired Greek and Latin, Italian and Spanish. She wrote poetry, and she and Johnson, early in their friendship, began work on a translation into English of Boethius's *Metres*. She endured twelve pregnancies, from which only four children survived. She was not a beautiful woman; Walter Jackson Bate, Johnson's best biographer, describes her (from portraits) as "very short and birdlike, with a sharp nose, a wide mouth, and large hands . . . But, if not a beauty, she was vivacious, charming, and warm-hearted." She saw to it that Johnson's every physical and psychological need was met. He, in turn, was devoted to her.

What was in this friendship initially for Hester Thrale was perhaps the capture of a lion, for Johnson was already famous as a literary man and his reputation as the greatest talker in England was backed up by repeated performance. What was in it for Samuel Johnson was, at first, a life of an orderly kind that he had never known and within a family that adored him and, later, a relationship with a person in whom he could confide many of the things that troubled him. Mrs. Thrale's husband was a philanderer, in a way not uncommon to the age and, apparently, not all that troubling to her. Johnson was long a widower. Yet physical love between the two was never considered.

• • •

Dorothy Parker and Robert Benchley seem to have had a close friendship of nearly perfect equality and without its being soiled by competitiveness on either side, rare in two writers working roughly the same vein of sophisticated comedy. Parker lived more recklessly than Benchley, and he was always around to help pick up the

debris from her destructive habits and bad decisions. "Keep this up, Dorothy," he is supposed to have said when visiting her in the hospital after one of her suicide attempts, "and you're going to make yourself very sick."

Closer to our time, Evelyn Waugh (pen name for Arthur **Evelyn** St. John **Waugh**), who would have dismissed *cross-sex friendship* as vulgar American sociologese (which of course it is), enjoyed such a friendship with the novelist Nancy Mitford, the author of *Love in a Cold Climate* and other works. They were contemporaries — he was born in 1903, she in 1904 — and she was of the aristocracy, to which he aspired and to which his talent as an artistically and commercially successful novelist eventually gained him entry. Both considered themselves superior, which they doubtless were, but treated each other as equals.

Their friendship began in earnest when Evelyn Waugh's first wife, who was a friend of Nancy Mitford's, left him for another man — a shattering experience — and Mitford showed her allegiance to him. Without many of the ordinary virtues though Waugh was, gratitude appears to have been one he never abandoned. He had friendships with other women — Lady Diana Cooper and Ann Fleming (the wife of Ian Fleming) — but none so rewarding to him (to them both, really) as that with Nancy Mitford.

• • •

Some might say that there is a prior, less surmountable barrier, hormonal in nature. They would argue that a true relation of any closeness between a man and a woman in which sex isn't, in ways evident or obscure, a prominent factor is simply not possible. In *The Sun Also Rises*, Ernest Hemingway has a character say, "Women made such swell friends. Awfully swell. In the first place, you had to be in love with a woman to have a basis in friendship." Hemingway,

often so touchingly poetical a writer, really shouldn't have been permitted to think. In his friendships with women, he seemed to want that common enough male fantasy, a lover with a man's mind and a woman's body. This, though, isn't available.

• • •

Friendship is different from love. Physical love is about possession; the heat it ignites is nothing like the cool, measured pleasures friendship brings. The two, as I have noted earlier, are best left unmixed. In support of this point, Nietzsche, in *Human, All Too Human*, remarks that "women can form a friendship with a man very well; but to preserve it — to that end a slight physical antipathy will probably help." This much, at least, can be said: once sex, not latent but actual, becomes an element in the relationship, something other than friendship is going on.

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Exceptions doubtless exist to this general rule about male-female friendships being unable to survive physical intimacy. A story used to be told about the now forgotten Chicago writer Isaac Rosenfeld, in his day an impressive woman-chaser, who was keeping company with a homely woman of wide intellectual interests. A friend asked Rosenfeld, who before then had many attractive female friends, what was really going on. "Ah," he is reported to have replied, "it's not the sex that interests me, but the conversation afterward, which is dazzling."

• • •

A latent libidinal interest in a friend of the other sex doesn't, I think, count. I should be delighted to confirm Freud by reporting that many women, in their need to get me into their beds, have spoiled otherwise deep friendships, but, sad truth to tell, with only one notable exception — thank God — women seem to find me completely

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Dialing

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resistible.

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Letty Cottin Pogrebin puts this matter well in her book *Among Friends*, where she writes that “love is always enlarged when two lovers have a friendship, while friendship is usually diminished when two friends become lovers.” She also feels that women “must be desexualized in nonsexual contexts. We must not be seen as The Female when sex and gender are not relevant.” Sex among male and female friends can only, Ms. Pogrebin is too polite to say, f_____ everything up.

• • •

As a younger man, I had a few close friendships with young women, but none felt quite so free and easy as those I have today, in late middle age. I do not concede the Freudians any ground when I say that a man can best enjoy close, nonromantic friendships with women after he has reached a certain age, which is a fact that ought to be put on the credit side of the account book one keeps on the benefits and detractions of aging. And yet one wonders if the ability of even the young to have nonromantic friendships with people of the opposite sex isn't also changing.

• • •

One wonders, given the new arrangements of the young of both sexes in sharing dormitories, including bathrooms, during college years and later sharing apartments in which nothing sexual is going on, if we haven't already arrived at a minuscule change in human nature. As a scruffy old sex dog, I have my doubts; human nature is not as easily changed as all that. Yet lots of young heterosexual men and women do share apartments, usually for financial reasons, without things going in the direction I, as a young man in a less free time, would devoutly have liked them to have gone.

• • •

In the Elizabeth Gaskell novel *Wives and Daughters*, the character Lady Cumnor remarks, “You men concern yourselves with the eternal verities; we women are content to ponder the petty things in life.” The petty things in life include merely the careful observation of details, the nuances of human

personality and character, the chemistry and dynamics of human relationships.

As for those eternal verities, we all know how far we men have come in understanding them. Lady Cumnor, in saying what she did, couldn't, of course, have been more ironic. ○

Ruben Alvarado awarded White Badge

On October 5, Ruben Alvarado was awarded his white badge by Membership Chair, Craig Cox, after he had completed five out of seven possible tasks, which include:



- Attending a Board Meeting
- Being a Member of or Chairing a Committee
- Attend a District Function
- Sponsor a new member
- Perform a duty during a meeting, e.g., lead the flag salute, give the invocation, be the greeter, or hand out badges to the members as they enter the meeting
- Creating a flow diagram of how Altadena Rotary fits into the Rotary network
- Give a craft talk

○

Form & Line by Jacque Foreman, Editor

I'm returning to one of my favorite little books, *The Unexpected Evolution of Language* by Justin Cord Hayes.

Today, let's discuss the word **Hospital**. Its original meaning was: *poor house, inn*. Its current meaning is: *a place where one receives medical care*.

Hospital conjurs up scary images of doctors, gurneys, x-rays, and very long needles. But at one time, a *hospital* was not a medical center at all. It was a place in which the poor and needy lived.

You don't need to an etymologist to see

the *visual* connection among words like hospital, hotel, hostel, and hospice. All these words share latin roots that refer to foreigners or strangers. They are places for temporary shelter.

Over time, a hospital stopped being a place for the poor and became an inn, a place where a visitor was shown hospitality. Over more time, the word *hospital* became specialized, just like its *cousins*, hotel and hostel. A hotel is a place to stay for a while when you travel. A hospital is a place to stay for a while because you're sick. ○

Kapasa Musonda

Returns



With the help of Altadena Rotary, Kapasa attended the Fashion Institute of Design & Merchandising in Los Angeles.



She returns to Los Angeles as a featured participant in *African Fashion Week* under the name of her company: *Mangishi Doll*.



She is scheduled to visit Altadena Rotary October 12.

ALTADENA LIBRARY DISTRICT PRESENTS THE

Second Saturday

2017-18 CONCERT SERIES*

October 14	<i>Upstream*</i>	March 10	<i>DeRumba</i>
November 11	<i>The Tone Brothers</i>	April 14	<i>Kenny Sara and the Sounds of New Orleans</i>
December 2	<i>Upbeat Swing Orchestra</i>	May 12	<i>Eli Locke Band</i>
January 13	<i>Kai Clark with special guests John York & Carla Olson</i>	June 9	<i>Crown City Bombers</i>
February 10	<i>Gerry Rothschild Band</i>		



*October 14th's Second Saturday Concert featuring Upstream is sponsored by the office of Los Angeles County Supervisor Kathryn Barger.

All other Second Saturday Concerts are supported in part by funds received from the Pasadena Tournament of Roses Foundation.

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