

2017-2018 Rotary Club of San Marino Summary
Prepared by Denise Wadsworth, 2017-2018 Club President

Interactors: please stand and be recognized. As I review my Presidential year in the next few moments, if you remember only one thing, remember this: I do this thing called Rotary for you. You are Making a Difference. You will continue to Be the Inspiration. You are the action verbs of the world: the doers and designers, creators and collaborators. You are my People of Change. I'm grateful for you. Please be seated.

Club Board of Directors and Committee Chairs: thank you. Bong, Norma, and San Marino Community Church: Thank you. Friends, dear friends, thank you.

Some of you know that my better half, Richie Blair, travels Monday through Friday for his work. We check in by phone each evening during the week, and he knows that my motto for a good day at middle school is "No blood; No broken bones." Same goes for Rotary. While Richie and I have had quite a busy first year of marriage, there have been no ambulances or 9-1-1 calls during our watch. We're grateful for that. We have experienced our losses, though, with the sudden passing of Richie's mother in Scotland in September, the equally sudden passing of one of my true mentors, Altadena Rotarian Ray Carson, on Easter Sunday, and the leave-taking of both my parish priests. As a woman of faith, I know that things fall apart so that they can fall back together. You have kept me together. Our months have merged and here I **still stand** at the end of our Rotary year thanks to all of you.

So let's begin where we began with our fabulous 4th of July Parade sponsored by the Rotary Club of San Marino. Rotarian Debbie Priester runs this event annually and was aided by the bright minds of Bob Houston and Greg Johansing and our many Rotary volunteers. Isaac Hung and his sons Myron and Joey got the float out of storage and Interactors decorated it. That's where our weekly programs began under the able hands of PDG Steve Garrett and Past President Bill Payne who worked a year in advance to offer us challenging, humorous and inspiring programs. Two weeks later, Richie and I wed at St. Edmund's Church. That event went smoothly thanks to the monumental support of Rotarians Terry Petrillo and Sue Spence and our ever ready and supportive Fresh Gourmet catering team lead by Norma Olivas,

Thanks to your generous wedding gifts to the San Marino Rotary Foundation, we are part of a Rotary Global Grant that has been approved for a farm school in Argentina. Thank you Shody Chow, Aaron Gil and JP Mainguy for leading our International Committee in this effort!

August – oh, August! The dog days of Summer! While Richie and I honeymooned in Hawaii, Fang Ho took the helm at Southwestern Academy thanks to Headmaster, Past President and Rotoscope Writer, Ken Veronda. Then Hurricane Harvey hit Texas and I paused to be mindful to count my blessings and think through how we, as Rotarians, help our world.

By the end of August, Mini-Grant Co-Chairs Gilda Moshir and Calvin Lo were busy promoting the \$25,000 in available mini-grants for areas school teachers. We ended August with our first Rotary on the Town Friendraiser with Partnership for Awareness at the Old Mill.

September came as did the aftermaths of hurricanes Harvey, Irma, and Maria. Here's the good news: ShelterBox was there to help, and thanks to our HMS Interactors holding plant and plushie sales all year long, so were we with over \$3000 in funds to purchase three ShelterBoxes. The Rotary Club of San Marino's first quarter giving ended with a \$50,000 contribution to the Barth Athletic Complex on the Huntington Middle School Campus from proceeds of our 2017 San Marino Motor Classic.

October was a bittersweet month with the Las Vegas killing of at the Route 91 Harvest Festival. Attending a Rotary on the Town gathering in the 2100 Block of Huntington Drive and listening to Steve Gilmore's

recollection of his 3000-mile bicycle journey to raise funds and awareness for the Leukemia and Lymphoma society reminded us that we all have missions to promote peace, goodwill, and understanding while here on earth.

November came and went without incident as we hosted the Tournament of Roses Queen and Court. Thank you, Jonathan Duong and Tony Chou for chairing this annual Tournament of Roses event. We followed that up with our hands-on effort with the Rotary Club of Pasadena building 300 bikes for area youth. Thank you, Aaron Gil, for spearheading that effort.

Continuing our involvement in the community, and especially with youth, is part of the Rotary Club of San Marino's Five-Year Vision Plan. To that end, December was a fly by month with our joint holiday Ugly Sweater Party for a Cause with the Chinese Club of San Marino to raise the necessary funds for a meaningful hands-on project that could be completed here in San Marino. Thank you to HMS Principal, Jason Kurtenbach, the HMS Social Studies Department, Rotarians, HMS students, and staff. This was a one-off event with a goal of raising money to package 25,000 meals. As Dennis Kneier has said in the past, our Club "gets things done," and we did just that by raising enough funds to package 36,000 meals, 40% more than expected. From the Chinese Club of San Marino, I thank Immediate Past President John Chou, Johnson Shyong, Nancy Lee and Shirley Shih. From the RCSM I thank Grace Yang, Tony Chou, Natalie Petrillo, Bill Payne, Sue Spence, Terry Petrillo, Richie Blair & Isaac Hung. We can never ever thank enough Mitch Lehman from the San Marino Tribune and Zane Hill from the San Marino Outlook for the extensive coverage of our meetings, parties and community service projects. We followed up that party with funding of children's for our LaCasa de San Gabriel families of preschoolers. Thank you, Past Presidents, Pete Corzo and George Orłowsky for your leadership. Thank you RCSM Past President Wayne Carter for introducing us to this project.

As well, our TLC students came to visit in December. This was an especially good year for both TLC and RYLA as we doubled the number of attendees for both of our youth leadership camps. Twenty students attended TLC and twenty attended RYLA. Thank you, Debbie Priestler and Rob Feidler for chairing these youth events.

Flip the calendar and welcome in 2018. On January first, the state of California legalized marijuana. It does not appear to be used on a daily basis by most of our San Marino Rotarians, especially on meeting days, otherwise; I think more of us would have laughed at the jokes when we did have them. Thankfully, we did bring the jokes back...and they've been G-rated, although I was petrified when Aaron "A-Ron" Weiss told one last week when he had the mic. January included speaking engagements by both Past President and current Mayor of San Marino, Steve Talt, and SMHS Principal and Very Bright Red Badge Rotarian, Isaac Gates.

Throughout the winter months, hundreds of Scholastic books were delivered to schools nearby and as far away as Mexico through our Rotary Readers program chaired by Jean Brodhead and brought to us many years ago by Past President Will Bortz. Interactors at Southwestern Academy and HMS placed bookplates in each book. Members of our International Committee visited our global grant site at Angela Peralta Elementary checking in on the irrigation and water storage equipment and delivering additional Scholastic books with accompanying cassette tapes, cassette recorders, and toys.

February began as a pleasant month with our fourth Rotary on the Town event hosted by Grace Yang at Malbec in Pasadena. We all especially enjoyed hearing love stories from our Rotarians who attended. Many of us then celebrated Chinese New Year with the East Meets West Club the following Sunday, continuing our yearlong theme of "playing on each other's playgrounds." We quickly sobered, though, by the tragedy at Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School in Parkland, FL with 17 murdered by a fellow student on Feb. 14 and became a bit more serious when we heard the riveting stories of poverty and access to education in Bangladesh by Amarak Society Co-Founder, Gem Munro. While commonly a

closet conversation, our community became more vocal online and at our SMUSD School Board Meetings about easily accessible mental health support for our students.

March marched on. Will Bortz, Chair of the San Marino Rotary Foundation, hosted our annual Paul Harris Luncheon at the Huntington Library and Gardens honoring Jeanne Edwards and Marina Wang with Rotary Global Scholar and SMHS graduate, Jennifer Binley, keynoting.

In April, Grace Yang graced us with another beautiful art competition that --for the first time --included middle school student entries. Grace: Thank you for your artistic passion. This year's application, highlighting last year's winners, as well as the Art Competition program itself-- with each student's award projected on the screen while the student received the award -- was professional and beautiful.

The very next week Isaac Hung chaired our SMHS Business Plan Competition and the very next week all our HMS students and staff participated in that packaging of 36,000 meals for Rise Against Hunger--thanks again to our unconventional fundraising efforts. 800 people: That's how many participated in our hands-on project. By far, that was the largest hands-on, done in a day, volunteer efforts in our community. On that same day, we were hosted by the Rotary Club of Alhambra, who sponsored our Club 79 years ago, for a Rotary Family Reunion. Our Community Service Chair, Len Therrien, arranged for two beautiful trees to be planted in Lacy Park near the Rose Garden to celebrate Earth Day 125 saplings to be donated to the National Forest Foundation. Our San Marino Rotary Charities Community Grant Committee Chair, Michelle Cox, met with her committee and determined how to disperse funds to so many amazing nonprofits within our greater Pasadena community. Rotarians attended, judged, and celebrated as our District 5300 Rotary Business Plan Competition entrant won the competition and finished the month with Club members and their families joining forces with the Rotary Club of South Pasadena for the one-day building of a home near Tecate, Mexico.

May programs included our annual Salute to the Military Academy thanks to Co-Chairs Bill Payne and Aaron Gil. Three of our Huntington Middle School Teachers demonstrated how they used their mini-grant funds. Thanks to mini-grants, our community's teachers provided additional science, tech, art, music, and academically enriching opportunities to our community's children. But the day that uncomfortably sticks in my mind is May 18 when, while celebrating our accomplishments at our District Conference we are once again confronted with a school shooting: this time at Santa Fe HS in Texas reminding us that we cannot rest on our laurels. There is still too much good work to do.

We've just completed our annual fundraiser supporting the San Marino Motor Classic through our tremendous volunteer efforts. Our Rotary Interactors, San Marino Rotarians, and friends of Rotary worked side-by-side to genuinely and enthusiastically welcome guests and exhibitors to the event. I'm grateful for your accounting skills, Dennis, your commitment to the Club and commitment to the San Marino Motor Classic. I'm especially grateful to Past President Bob Nafie for rolling out this idea eight years ago and for RCSM Past President Pete Corzo having the intestinal fortitude to make our financial participation a part of our membership.

Flag Day. June 14. It's been a really good week. Email from Rotary International yesterday: Congratulations! Your global grant application for funding to provide a scholarship to Ms. Nicole Grajewski to receive a DPhil in International Relations with a concentration in conflict resolution and peace studies from the University of Oxford, Oxford, England, submitted by the Rotary Club of Banbury and District 5300, has been approved by The Rotary Foundation. The award is in the amount of US\$60,125.00.

SMUSD approved funding and personnel for a Wellness Center on the SMHS Campus. HMS promoted Mrs. Alana Faure to lead our school as Principal, and the Rotary Club of San Marino promoted Fang Ho to President and Greg Johansing to President-Elect. It's been a really good year. We have much to celebrate and still much to do to promote peace, goodwill, and understanding, so...

**Rotarians and Guests: Thank you for joining us for today's meeting.
Now, go out into the world in peace.
Have courage!
Hold fast to what is good.
Return no one evil for evil.
Strengthen the faint-hearted,
Support the weak,
Help the Suffering.
Honor All People.
The June 14 meeting of the Rotary Club of San Marino is adjourned.**