

SAN MARINO *Outlook*

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Photo by Larissa Althouse / OUTLOOK

Bob Horgan (left) receives the Paul Harris Fellow award from Rotary Club of San Marino last week. Rotarian Fred Sohl remarked on Horgan's time with the annual Grad Night production.

Mainstay of Grad Night Has His Day in the Sun

By Zane Hill
The Outlook

For his decades of "know-how, dedication and perspiration" in helping to bring about the annual Grad Night celebration

for San Marino High School seniors, longtime resident Bob Horgan was named this year's Paul Harris Fellow for the Rotary Club of San Marino.

Horgan, a member of SMHS'

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Horgan Is Named Paul Harris Fellow by Rotary Club

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class of 1958, was honored at the club's annual program at the Huntington Library last week.

"Now I know how a movie star feels," he quipped upon being called to the front of the ballroom.

Horgan is part of the small group called "The Old Guard" that has continued to be involved in Grad Night productions even in the decades after their own children have gone onto adulthood. He has volunteered to work on every Grad Night since 1974 — for a total of 45 — the year one of his neighbors graduated; his first kid graduated 10 years later.

"The camaraderie, the friendships, it's amazing," Horgan said. "I learned something every year, and in my advanced age, when I'm learning, that's good."

Grad Night is an extravagant affair involving large wooden props reshaped and repainted to match a different theme each year. Work begins every January and lasts until just before graduation, when the volunteers host a Light Up ceremony. The practice began in 1956 as an effort to give a safe all-night celebration for SMHS' outgoing seniors.

Rotarian Fred Sohl introduced Horgan, highlighting Grad Night as "a labor of love these graduates never forget."

"In January each year, Bob answers the call to action," Sohl said. "He begins with repairing any damaged flats and painting out the previous year's theme. After the flats are moved to the high

school, he's there at 7 a.m. each morning, receiving lumber, positioning, bolting and bracing, and showing the ropes to the neophyte dads and moms how it's done. Now, too, he is providing more supervision than 'sweat equity,' but he's there, keeping his string of consecutive years of Grad Night set construction intact and ever-increasing."

Horgan gave credit to the Rotary Club for its regular contributions and volunteerism toward Grad Night — he attended the third celebration — throughout the decades and emphasized his gratitude to the club for selecting him as a Paul Harris Fellow.

"Rotary always comes through, and from a San Marino High School graduate, I thank Rotary for what they do for graduation," he said. "I am truly humbled to be put on a list of so many heavyweights and, from the bottom of my heart, I thank you."

According to Rotary International's website, Paul Harris Fellow recognition acknowledges individuals who contribute, or who have contributions made in their name, of at least \$1,000 to the Rotary Foundation. Rotary established the recognition in 1957 to encourage and show appreciation for substantial contributions to what was then the foundation's only program, Rotary Foundation Fellowships for Advanced Study, the precursor to Ambassadorial Scholarships.

**Photos by
Larissa Althouse
The Outlook**



Rotary President Fang Ho, Lu de Sylva and keynote speaker Dr. Gaelen Stanford-Moore



Pana Gelt and Paul Callahan



Steve Talt and Lisa Link



Kathie Haralambos, Dan Maljanian and Julie Wofford



Bill and Sue Shearin, Jim Saxton, Judy Maryon and Kirk Boman



Huntington President Karen Lawrence, Chuck Miller, Wayne Carter and Valerie Weiss



James Nash, Grace Yang and Michael McCall



Stephanie Johnson, Lois Matthews and Ruth Mayeda



Lieueen and Gary Thomas with Liz and Dennis Kneier



David and Marina Wang with C. Joseph Chang



Darius Moshir, Ave Bortz and Stephanie Keys



Nicholas and Lynette Sohl, Lori Cuccia and Fred Sohl



Donna Balbin, Michele Carter, Ann Boutin, Beth Davis, Dina McCall, Jennifer Giles and Helen Spitzer